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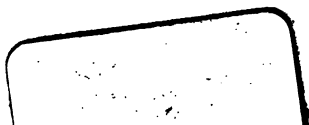
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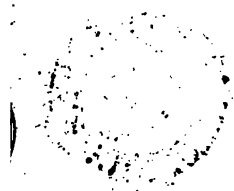
The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study. It then presents a literature review of the existing research on the topic. The methodology section describes the research design and the data collection process. The results section presents the findings of the study, and the conclusion section summarizes the main findings and provides recommendations for future research.

The study was conducted in a laboratory setting, and the data were collected using a series of experiments. The results of the experiments were analyzed using statistical methods, and the findings were compared with the results of previous studies. The study found that the research objectives were achieved, and the results were consistent with the findings of previous research.

The study also found that there are several factors that influence the results of the research. These factors include the experimental design, the data collection process, and the statistical methods used to analyze the data. The study provides recommendations for future research, including the need for further research on the topic and the need to improve the experimental design and data collection process.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

L I F E

OF THE VERY REVEREND

MR. JAMES FRASER, OF BREA,

Minister of the Gospel at Culrofs.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

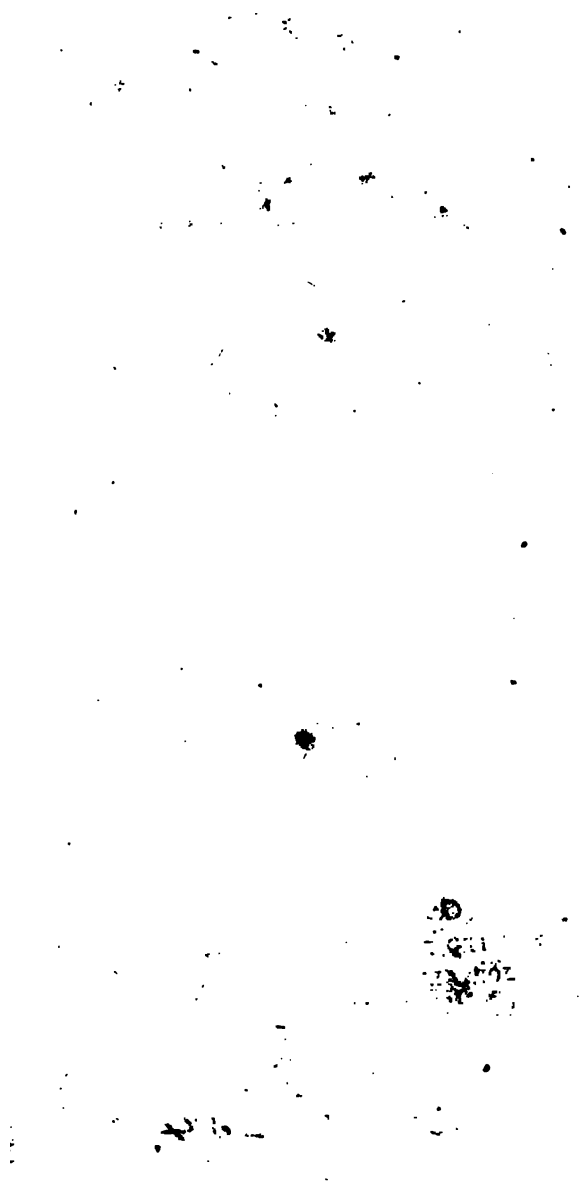
THE SECOND EDITION.



GLASGOW,
PRINTED BY JOSEPH GALBRAITH,
FOR ALEXANDER M'KENZIE,
THE PUBLISHER.

1798.

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The Publishers of the First Edition, to the Reader.

SUNDRY copies of the following memoirs having been wrote out by the reverend author's own hand, for the use of particular ministers and private christians of his acquaintance, and handed from one person to another, has raised a desire in such as had not the property of these copies, but only the use of them for some short time, that a fair and correct edition of the book might be printed, for their, benefit and for the benefit of others who have not had the advantage to read it.

This, together with the desire of some of the author's friends and nearest relations on life, induced us to attempt this publication; and we can assure you, that after comparing our copy (which, as you'll see by the preface, is dedicated to the reverend Mr. Thomas Ross sometime minister at Tayne, with a power to him to publish it or not as he pleased) with some other copies, it is found to be the most correct, and in the neatest language; and this may be owing to the reverend author's bestowing more particular pains on it than on other copies, because of the probability that it would sometime or other be published.

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And now, wishing you may, on reading of it, reap the benefit the reverend author intended by it; we rest

Your Welwishers.

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The

THE

P R E F A C E.

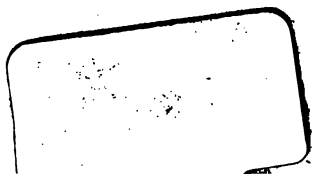
THE design of publishing this part of the works of the worthy author, is to do honour to his memory, and to gratify severals, whose favour of piety hath indeared it to them; of whom we might mention some of high distinction. If it be asked why it was not published sooner, there is no other reason to be given, than that it was a loss, and that better now than not at all. By the dedication to Mr. Thomas Rofs (a singularly pious minister in the north) the author seems to give permission to publish it: so that the world may be fully satisfied that the work is genuine, being copied from that writ by his own hand; of the truth of which they may rest assured, as can be attested by several ministers still living. The reason why Mr. Thomas Rofs did not cause to publish it probably was, that he was at the time he received it, in prison at Tayne, and died there in prison, or soon there after. Such as had a tender regard for the author, wished that this had been published at the same time with the first part of his treatise on faith; particularly this would help to clear up that, as to some things dark, and not so very obvious, at least till it was thought proper to

The PREFACE.

publish the second part of that treatise. It was
is the wish of many, that the rest of his life,
ticularly after his settlement at Culrofs, had
n got ; for surely he wrote diaries during life :
, after all the search possible, this could not be
nd. This now published is however very val-
le, and will be so esteemed by the truly serious
l judicious, being a very rational account of con-
fession, as to beginning, progress and issue,
l of the operation of the spirit of God on the
art ; and such an account of faith as cannot but
ase those who love it, and may, by the blessing
God, help to engage to it such as hitherto had
not in reality. There is perhaps no other per-
mance gives a more distinct account of a super-
natural work of grace ; and it is thought not to be
seasonable at this juncture, for reviving piety and
exercise of grace, and convicting those who
ke a jest of these serious matters. The first
ht chapters, dedicated to Mr. Thomas Rofs,
re allowed by himself to be published : what
lows is judged to be of good use, and therefore
w published with the rest.



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viii.

DEDICATION.

"hide it, as you shall think fit ; I wish you profit
" hereby, and am in Christ,

Reverend Sir,

Your loving Friend,

JAMES FRASER.

I shall reduce what I have met with to these eight heads ; (1.) What hath been the Lord's carriage to me before I knew any thing of God, or had so much as the form of religion. (2.) Some steps of God's providence while the Lord was drawing me to himself ; or some preparation-work to my conversion, while my heart was not fully changed, but only had some appearance of godliness. (3.) Some things concerning my conversion, the time and manner ; and what immediately followed. (4.) Of the sad and long decay that happened thereafter. (5.) Relate some things touching my recovery out of that decay. (6.) Some things that happened immediately after this recovery for the space of four or five years. (7.) Some things relating to my present condition, and some things I have observed in my experience. (8.) Some particular mercies I have met with from the Lord at several occasions.

MEMOIRS

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE

OF THE VERY REVEREND

MR. JAMES FRASER OF BREA.

CHAP. I.

Touching some things that happened to me from my birth till I was nine years old.

1. **I** Was born in the north of Scotland in 1639, July 29th, and was not like to live, but the Lord healed me; for the evil humours broke out in boils great and numerous, so that I was very wholesome thereafter: my disposition was fullen, and I loved not to be dawted, nor to wear gawdy cloaths; nor had I any wife tales like other children, so that I gave no occasion to my parents to repeat them, as parents usually do with fondness: for tho' my parents were fond enough of their children, yet my temper was so peevish, that I was no dawtie; only at school I learned well, tho' now and then I staid away.

2. Even at this time I shewed plainly that I had a will to do evil; for the seeds of wickedness did spring up, and appeared in many vitious childish tricks: by all which the necessity of regeneration was evident, and that by nature we are under the power of sin and Satan; even a child is known by his doings, whether

whether his work be pure, and whether it be right
 Prov. xx. 11. And these were all my preparations and dispositions for good.

3. Yet the Lord was doing me good all the while. I overpass common mercies, and mention one that was very remarkable. My mother being obliged to come south, to be out of the way of a cruel enemy who prosecuted her, lived with a relation in a burrough-town on the coast-side: I was very unruly, and therefore kept under some awe and restraint from wandering abroad when I pleased; but this increased my desire to ramble the more. At a time I slip'd out, unknown to any, to a garden where was a deep well; when once got out of doors, I ran as hard as ever I could, and, not taking heed where I went, I fell in a path which carried me directly to the well before spoken of, open above, and overgrown with grass, which did hide the water from me; so that ere I knew, I fell over head in the well, the water being very deep; only my hands laid hold on the grass that did grow on the sides of the well. Here I continued for a good space, and would, no doubt have drowned, if God had not sent some to my relief; for he that was appointed to wait upon me, not knowing whither I went, the mere providence of God led him out to seek me in the garden; and when coming to the further end of it, and despairing to find me, went back with intention to seek me in the town, which if he had done, I had perished for ever: but, the Lord directing him in his back-coming to the well, he cast his eyes and perceived a hand lying on the grass, which extremity had caused me to do, and, looking more narrowly, found it was I; and so, addressing himself to my relief, with much ado pulled me out of the water, even ready to expire, and unable to help myself.

myself : and after the water was poured out of my mouth, and I had slept a while, I was as well as ever, thro' the wonderful goodness of God. Oh that I may walk worthy of this kindness, and that I may be preserved to do him pleasure and service! This happened to me during my first appearance in the world.

CHAP. II.

Relating some things concerning God's dealing with me while under some common work of the spirit, and not fully converted, from the time I was nine years old till I was seventeen.

ERe I was really and fully converted, and drawn to God in Christ, I advanced four steps ; and in everyone of them I had undoubtedly rested, and so, missing of Christ, had undoubtedly perished, if I had not been beaten out of them : but the Lord seeing me ready to rest in these, made them all to break under me, until at last he revealed his Son Jesus to my soul, whom to know is life eternal.

STEP I.

Was the getting some prayers by heart, and saying of them in a formal way morning and evening ; so that now I was compleat as I thought : the Lord likewise then was drawing my heart to what was good ; for when I said my prayers morning and evening, and did not slight them, then had I very much peace and comfort of heart ; and when I omitted them, I was vexed in my conscience. Sometimes for a while together I would omit seeking of God thro' sloth, and then would I be terrified with fearful dreams, the voice of which I thought was a rebuke for omitting of my prayers ;

ers; and for a while thereafter I would be very zealous; and, when I did any kind of duty, I would not be troubled at all; and what evil soever came upon me, I judged it to be for the omission of my duties, which I looked upon as my greatest sin. By these means, as the most meet and fit for me then, did the Lord seek to cause me follow good, and to eschew evil.

But this continued not long, for I decayed; and so thereby I was beaten from this, as I was from other resting places. The means and occasions were, (1.) These who should have overseen me grew careless; they let me alone, and took no account of me at all, but entrusted me to others: and therefore *having no King, I did what was right in my own eyes*, Judg. xvii. 6. (2.) The Lord, after he had several times drawn me to the yoke by fearful dreams and some small convictions, finding then that the impressions of these things wore off me, that I slip'd out of the collar again, and not intending that this should be my rest, did not trouble me; and I not having changes, but being let alone, let God and duty alone, Psal. lv. 19. (3.) Because it was but common grace, and my soul being not united to Christ the fountain, hence any thing I had vanished and perished, John xv. 4. (4.) Several lusts not being destroyed, but kept, notwithstanding of all my duties, especially pleasures, did in the end *choke* any good that was sown, Luke viii. 14. (5.) Evil company did me likewise much harm; and, thro' continual converse with them, I was transformed into their image, 1. Cor. v. 6. and xv. 33. (6.) Because, if this had not broken under me, I would have rested here, and so, coming short of Christ, would have perished, Mic. ii. 10. (7.) Because I got not full rest and contentment in God, and, wanting it in him, I behaved

hoved to go out to my lusts for it at last, Mat. xii. 44. *The unclean spirit goeth out wanting rest, and finding none, hence he returns.* (8.) Because my decay came by degrees, and not all at once; and therefore still I thought I would overtake it, and therefore said, *yet a little sleep, a little slumber:* and the longer I continued, the more indisposed I grew, and greater difficulties I found, Prov. xxiv. 33. 24. Thro' these means mainly it was that I fell from this state, so that I neglected duty altogether, and at last did so without a challenge, and gave but too much way to other sins, until God used new means, and made another assault, which he did shortly thereafter, thus:

STEP II.

Was the zealous performance of some duties, especially prayer. Before I had nothing but cunn'd lessons, but now I could bake my own bread; and I know not how, and wonder still at it, that, having so little knowledge, I could yet be able to conceive a prayer, and continue therein for some reasonable time, and not only so, but to delight in it likewise, and that in a greater measure than I did formerly. The occasion was this: my father was sick and like to die, and then sent for me, having provided a chaplain to the house, who was to have the oversight of me likewise; he was a godly, tender-hearted man, but none of the deepest reach: and his zeal appeared still the more, in that there was nothing among ourselves but either ignorance, profanity or formality; while he seemed to follow the power of godliness, for which he was generally hated and despised. He was a great enemy to vice, such as drunkenness, sabbath-breaking and wearing, ills common enough in the family and country; and being continued our chaplain after

my father's death (for about that time he died) he set himself to spread the sincere knowledge of God, and to do good to others ; and, for this cause, instructed, reprov'd, and set them upon the practice of duties. I coming home, was deliver'd over to him, and to his oversight; which was a great grief to me, nor relishing his strictness. The first night I would have gone to bed without prayers; but, as I was putting off my clothes, he mark'd my design, and commanded that I should fall down on my knees and recommend myself to God e'er I went to bed, which I obeyed, and said over my evening-prayer I had before got by heart, he reading his book in the mean time.

When I was in my bed, the consideration of my new yoke did put me out to weep bitterly. The man was lean and hard-favoured, and kept at a great distance from me, and was very precise, an humour I was never before acquainted with ; as likewise, I was secretly fearing the imposition of greater burdens upon me. I comforted myself by a little vent I gave my sorrows.

But, to return : one day, as we were talking more familiarly than ordinarily we were wont, he desired to hear my prayers. I thereupon repeated both morning and evening prayers I had learned formerly: to which he giving attention, and knowing both by the matter, and my way of repeating them, that they were a cunning'd lesson which I had some way learned from others, he told me that, unless I had got the spirit of God to teach me to pray, I could not go to heaven; and that all other prayers prov'd ineffectual : and thereupon, a while after, he in all his exhortations to me address'd to speak against set forms of prayer, and press'd us that were children to express the pure and real conceivings of our own hearts, tho' we should but
utter

ve sentences at a time, and that this com-
 m the heart was better and more accepta-
 God than many and long prayers taught us
 rs. He likewise taught us the principles of
 1, the meaning of the belief, the Lord's
 and ten command's; and had a very strict
 er us, correcting us foundly for cursing,
 g, lying and sabbath-breaking; and observ-
 ways narrowly, and took a strict account of
 as to what we learned and of our practi-
 t especially of me; so that in a short time,
 ie Lord's blessing, I attained to some com-
 measure of knowledge, and left my former
 nd set about secret and public duties, being
 eleven years at this time; and use made du-
 y; and the peace I had in them, with the
 of a reward, and the influence of a natural
 nce, made me delight in them, so as in a
 me I went about them no longer by cons-
 but did them of mine own accord and will-
 and sometimes would exceed what was en-
 ne. Every day, morning and evening, I
 bow my knee, and read some portion of
 re, and would pray a conceived prayer at
 length, and with some earnestness, but had
 itual excercise, and had no communication
 God: I likewise began to comply with my
 gue better, and to love him better; and he
 me profit both in letters and godliness, was
 indly to me: nor could he be said for all
 etness to be rigid to me, insomuch that for
 ice of a whole year I remember not that I
 ice whipt, and one time was for swearing
 aying at cards. During the time which he
 th me, being a year and a half, I learned
 of my grammar; but, this being not my

rest, I fell grievously away from all this profession and practice.

2. The steps of this decay were, (1.) Wantonness and lightness in time of publick prayers, thro' a foolish light humour, and the tentations of others; for I studied not heart-reformation. (2.) More slight performance of duties when I durst not omit them: God suffer'd this to go with me, and therefore, (3.) I would sometimes omit them altogether, when out of the knowledge of my governor. (4.) I began to play on the sabbath-day with others, for which I got a memorandum: for one day, being the Lord's day, the children and I were playing some childish rougeries; which our governor (good man) hearing, calls us up, and then very seriously endeavours to perswade us and convince us of the sin of sabbath-breaking, and the danger thereof, and gave us a large exhortation, and thereafter enjoined us all to go to our knees and confess our sins to God, and seek pardon thereof, which we obeyed; and for my part, tho' at first I was constrained to it, yet I was serious both in acknowledging of guilt, and seeking pardon of sin: and, when we had done, we were dismiss'd, being first exhorted not to do the like again; which produced a reformation in us all for some time. (5.) 'Thro' mine own evil nature, which was never as then mortified, and the counsel of others that were my companions, I despised my governor or pedagogue, and did join with others in afflicting him by approbation and desire, tho' I durst not do it so openly. And I remember, one time he being out, an old soldier who was pitifully cut and mangled in the face had come to the house, with whom we got some way acquaint, and put him in the pedagogue's chamber with a drawn sword in his hand, and an old red gown on his back, a can-

dle burning before him, and sitting in a chair with a table on which he leaned, with a *Greek* new-testament in his hand on which he seem'd to read ; and all this, that, when the good man would enter the chamber, the strangeness of the spectacle might affright him, and that we might have matter of scorning him ; and for this cause we followed him as he was coming to his chamber after supper : but, when he came in, he suspected it to be a trick, and went to the foldier and took the sword out of his hand, and, putting him out of doors, he made him discover all those that had a hand in it, whom the next day thereafter he made to crave pardon publicly. O how mighty are folks when they walk with the Lord ! and how little do their adversaries gain of them ! (6.) I proceeded from this to a more open violation of the sabbath, and played with the servants at the club on the Lord's day, from six o'clock till it was nine, my tutor in the mean time, I know not how, either remitting in his zeal, or hoping when we were more settled in our affairs (for we were to go south on the next day) to rectify things. (7.) When I came south, my pedagogue became more rigid to me, and whipt me more frequently, I confess deservedly ; and I turned to hate him, and became stubborn, and would do nothing for him. My father being dead, I was but too much countenanced by those with whom I was, who would not suffer him to take such course with me as he would and I merited ; so that things came this length, that I openly reviled him, and avowedly omitted duty. At last he was put away. (8.) He once being put away, I became worse, & did no good at all ; I neglected duty sometimes for many days together. (9.) I was much given to lying and made an ordinary practice of it, so that I could scarce speak a true word.

(10.) I turned to mock godliness sometimes, tho' this did not proceed so much from an habit and nature and inclination, as from the temptations of others, whom, by this means, I studied to please.

(11.) My conscience at last became fear'd and insensible, so that I did all this with little or no remorse.

(12.) Swearing little petty oaths of *Faith, Conscience* and *Truth*, was, ordinary with me.

(13.) I broke out at last in the dreadful sin of blasphemy, which I utter'd with my tongue, playing one afternoon at cards, being about twelve years of age.

(14.) I stole from my mother's waiting man five shillings sterling while I lay with him; and, being suspected for it, I was denying it, but it was proven against me, and I was with shame made to restore it.

(15.) I cursed myself knowingly, in denying a thing which yet I knew to be true.

(16.) I became so wicked, as not content to omit prayer on the sabbath-day, and to talk idly as others did, I played the whole day at the dice, contrary to my light, and my conscience even in the mean time accusing and condemning me.

(17.) I was almost mine own murderer; for being grievously awed at the grammar-school, and ordinarily whipt whether I deserved it or not, and desirous to be rid of this grievous bondage, I knew no way but to procure a sickness to myself: and, for this cause, I went out to the cross and bought green fruits, and did eat nothing but that, and would oftentimes go naked all night, which procured me a flux, which I desired, and which continued with me for two whole years almost, which was near to have cost me my life; for, thro' grief, and ill diet and ill guiding, I took a bloody flux, in which I lay for two days, which was all the sickness I ever had. In a word I was clean gone, and nothing all

this time was dealing with me save only some ineffectual

fectual checks and movings upon my heart now and then.

3. This decay did proceed from the same causes with the former ; yet I remarked these five things to have had most influence on me : (1.) I prayed, but endeavoured not to take away my sins ; my prayers never kill'd my lusts, and therefore my lusts kill'd prayer : like many now, that profess, and yet sin on still ; that fear the Lord, and serve their idols. (2.) My governor decayed in his zeal, thro' want of good company, and thro' neglect of private prayer in which I marked him deficient, and thro' too much familiarity with the domesticks that did blunt his zeal ; and I think, seeing my wickedness grow upon him and overmaster him, he despaired of doing me good : he slept and *Satan* came in and sowed tares, Mat. 13. 25. (3.) Because, when he was gone, none took care of me ; and, *having no king, I did what was good in mine own eyes*. None did reprove or correct me for my faults, nor did look on my soul at all, or put me out to duty, but gave me loose reins ; and, old *Jehojadab* being dead or gone, *I did evil in the sight of the Lord*, Judg. 21. 25. 2 Chron. 24. 2, 17, 18. (4.) Because not followed with terrors and convictions, peace and ease did me ill, Prov. 1. 33. Jer. 51. 39. (5.) I found that evil company did me much harm ; I learned their ways ; they hardened and encouraged me in an ill course, and drew me from the Lord : for in my greatest decays, I mark this, that I was trysted with carnal godless company.

4. Yet, notwithstanding of this, I was not altogether left of God, for now and then I was in some good 'mood, and the spirit of God would strive and draw me contrary to my inclinations, so as now and then I would pray and read, and be affected : and this good did proceed from these causes, 1.) Some extraordinary sharp convictions from
the

the Lord on my conscience, that would put me out to prayer and to get peace ; which storm being over, I cared not for prayer any more, Acts 2. 37. Psal. 66. 3. (2.) Outward and grievous afflictions at school, by reason of the tyrannical rigidity of a certain school master I had, who delighted in the scourging of children, and would oft-times pick quarrels with me and scourge me for little or no fault at all ; so that every day almost I was sure to be scourged, carry and do as I liked ; which made my life grievous and a burden to me : and this in the anguish of my soul would cause me to pour out a prayer, Psal. 78. 35. Isa. 26. 12. 16. (3.) Sometimes our teachers would instruct us to pray ; and then an exhortation had some influence on me, and would put me in some frame, 2 Chron. 24. 2. (4.) I would out of conceit sometimes pray. I lingered on in this condition three or four years, until I went south again, in order to my going to the college.

STEP III.

1. I was then going about the form of all manner of duties both publick and private, joined likewise with reformation and zeal. Before I was only taken up in prayer, but now I made conscience of all duties ; and therefore meditated, read the scriptures frequently, and kept the sabbath very strictly, and reading of good books : and I left off all my old sins and ways, such as lying, swearing, and made conscience of all moral virtues ; I left my gaming, and idle talk, and became very temperate ; and, if I at any time failed, I would fall down on my knees, and beg the Lord's mercy. Yea, so zealous was I, that I endeavoured to gain others, and would reprove them for their looseness : *and this produced in me some love to the godly,*

so that I seemed both to myself and others a new man, and every thing to become new ; and yet a stranger to Christ, and lying fast bound in a natural condition. But the occasion of this reformation and great change was this; one sabbath-day afternoon, being then fifteen years of age, I read on a book called the *Practice of Piety*, concerning the misery of a natural man, the torments of hell, and the blessedness of a godly man, and some directions for a godly life: the Lord so wrought, and my heart was there-with so affected and drawn, that without more ado I henceforth resolved to become a new man, and to live not only a harmless life, but a godly and devout life, and to turn my back upon all my old ways, and utterly to forsake them, and thereupon immediately to set upon the practice of duties. And in this way and condition I had marvelous sweetness and peace, judging and esteeming myself really converted ; and would ordinarily in my prayers thank the Lord for giving me his good spirit ; and thought with myself, if I would but continue in this condition to the end, I should undoubtedly be saved. And, in a word, I was a compleat *Pharisee*; and for the benefit of others, I will describe the frame of my spirit under this dispensation.

2. I had the very characters of a formal *Pharisee*: for, (1.) I look'd only to the outward letter of the law, and did endeavour an outward conformity thereto; and, if I went about the outward form of duty, I sought no more, 2 Tim. 3. 5. Amos 4. 4. (2.) I judged myself rather by the length and multitude of my duties, more than by any other thing in them, Mat. 6. 7. (3.) I rested in duties as the end, and made them not the means to bring me to Christ: I looked on them as *opus operatum*; and therefore, when I did seek or pray
for

Why? Chap. iii. 14. *What profit is it that we have kept his ordinances?* (4.) By a certain providence I was brought to see the vanity of all this, which made me seek to another mountain for rest; and, finding none, I turned a seeker, tho' not in judgement, yet really and truly in practice; which made me despair not only of being happy by the works of the law which I had done, but even by these which I was to do; and so put from seeking it afterwards that way. And this was my last step and dispensation of providence I was trysted with.

STEP IV.

Was, being beat out of all forms, I turned a seeker, had no principle, but lived in hopes that God would reveal himself to me: sometimes I prayed; I had some comfort in doing duties with any affection and life, which sometimes I would win unto. The occasion was this; I was before this a formalist; duties were my Christ, which I began(thro' my prevailing lusts and outward temptations, and withal some secret suspicions of their influence to justify me) gradually to be remiss in: yet I left not the principle; for the principle remain'd (notwithstanding I fell short in my practice) that if I could abstain from my ordinary sins, keep the sabbath-day, pray morning and evening, and do every known duty, I should be saved. And this continued until, being left by my mother in a religious family, I by providence took up a book called the *Seventeen false Rests*; wherein I found the vanity of formality in duties discovered very plainly, and some other pitches and lengths I had not attained to. I was afterwards confirmed in this by reading the *Confession of Faith*, where it saith, *That tho' one should form his life never so exactly, according to nature and morality, without Christ*
be

be could not be saved. This was enough ; and the spirit seconding it, convinced me I was quite wrong first, and had never known what true grace was ; and beside, despaired ever of myself to come to that estate of grace : all my refuges of lies were shaken, and that which many sermons for a long time could not do, now in a moment three lines did.

2. The frame of my spirit might be thus described ; 1st, I thought all my duties, and all I could do, insufficient to save me, tho' as yet I saw not so clearly the insufficiency of duties ; and therefore did easily conclude, that all this time I was in an unconverted condition, and, if I died without a further change than yet I felt, I should undoubtedly be damned. 2^{dly}, I thought there was a certain state and blessed condition to which all the converted, and such as had the Lord's spirit, had come, and betwixt me and which there was a very great cloud ; and that I was, as it were, lock'd up from this. 3^{dly}, I had some hopes that God might do me good, and bring me to this state e'er I died. 4^{thly}, I had in the mean time some sharp and terrible convictions for particular sins, but not for my evil nature, and which did wear away without any remaining effect. 5^{thly}, I had no principle, nor rested in any thing, but looked for some divine manifestation and extraordinary revelation to my soul. 6^{thly}, I prayed sometimes when the spirit moved, and sometimes not ; yet had no peace except when I prayed with life and affections ; and then, tho' I rested not in this, yet would it comfort me. 7^{thly}, I thought these that were regenerate lived a life of perpetual comfort and glory, and always performed duties with life ; and, when I would arrive at this pitch, I would judge myself converted. And I further thought,

that there was a marvelous way of attaining to this; I looked for the kingdom of heaven to come with observation. *8thly*, I condemned all men; for seeing the unsuitableness of their lives to their principles, and their great carnality, and hearing their fruitless complaints and confessions and doubts, and expressing nothing of God's love, I thought all came short, and lived in an empty form. *9thly*, I thought them the best preachers who preached most methodically, and with greatest natural quickness, but understood not spiritual preachers. *10thly*, I ordinarily slighted duties, and fell in out-breakings of swearing, lying, and idle talking and carding; pleasures were my idol to which I was not mortified; I had no principle nor centre. *11thly*, I mourned for sin, not because it offended God, but because of the consequences of it; and this made me conclude I was not sincere: and I thought, if once I could win to hate sin because it offended God, that then I was sincere. I drove this trade for the space of three years almost, wherein I was settled in nothing but in a waiting and seeking condition.

3. During the time I was under the former dispensations, I was trysted with some wonderful providences, wherein much of the power and goodness of God, in delivering me from terrible temptations to despair, did visibly appear. They were these: *First*, a year and a half after I had blasphemed, being in my bed, the thoughts of that grievous sin came to my mind, and that with such horror as made me tremble with an unaccustomed fear; this was the first sting of sin. I essayed to pray, but could not get my mouth opened; there did a number of blasphemies and cursings run in my mind with great horror and against my will, which I thought was like the devil in me.

had not knowledge, and therefore was the more troubled ; for I was not fourteen years of age then. The more these thoughts did run in and present themselves to my mind, my horror was increased, so much that the horror of it was so great, that at last it became intolerable ; and then, in my extremity and in great anguish of spirit, the Lord visited me, and opened my mouth to pray for help, which I did most affectionately, and with great liberty and abundance of tears, which did by a secret virtue charm and calm my confused soul ; for now did I by this conceive that I was not quite forsaken of God, as likewise the terrible apprehensions of God began to cease, and I slept till the next day : but my troubles began the next day again, and I thereby was made more devout, so as I read on godly books ; and, casting the book up at random, the first passage I met with was his, “ when *Satan* casts in blasphemous thoughts in thy heart, be not discouraged ; for they are not thine, but *Satan's*.” Here was a well of water ; tho’ my eyes at first could not see it so full, yet it did somewhat help me, and by it now I perceived much of God’s condescending nature : in process of time, when I began to be less troubled, these blasphemous thoughts did wear away, and so did my trouble likewise.

A *second* wonderful and merciful providence was his : in the time I was a seeker, and heard them speaking of the sin against the holy ghost, and that it was unpardonable, I began presently to have some weak suspicions that I had sinned that in, when I had recalled my blasphemy to mind ; but concluded nothing certainly, because I knew not what the sin might be : and all this time it was my exercise to enquire at such as had knowledge, what that sin against the holy ghost might

he, but was not satisfied, and I had no books that speak of that sin at all, and some places of scripture in the evangelists that did treat of that sin could not solve my scruple ; but, the longer I continued, the more my fears increased : at last I took up a concordance to seek the Lord's mind in his word anent it, and for this cause I looked the word *sin* ; at last I was made to read, Heb. x. 26. *If we sin wilfully, &c.* I read them at length, and I thought I was stricken therewith as with thunder, and continued amazed and speechless for a while ; for I thought it was clear and past doubt I should go to hell, seeing I had sinned against knowledge, and wilfully, not being constrained thereto ; and I could not say but it did proceed from passion for my bad luck at the cards : so that, for the space of three days, this temptation was a very sad exercise to me. Now, said my heart to me, dost thou not at last see thy doom clearly revealed ? what need more witnesses ? then did I endeavour to pray, but was beaten back, because I thought it was in vain, seeing there is no more sacrifice for sin ; yet I prayed. That word, I remember, in the midst of my despair came to mind, *Abraham in hope believed against hope* ; and therefore, I thought, tho' there was no hope, yet I should hope against hope : this was the only thing that did uphold me then. I drave heavily and heartlessly like *Pharaoh's* chariots, because I had no hope ; altho' it stood me very much, I multiplied prayers, but they did not heal me ; I remembered *Esau*, who wept until he got a blessing : and did *Esau*, said I, prevail with his earthly father by his importunity, notwithstanding that he could not help him, so as in the end get some blessing ; and cannot the power and wisdom of God pelp me, tho' I cannot conceive how ? his thoughts are above

bove mine. This staid me something, and withal put me to multiply my prayers, and to increase in importunity : but, after I was for three days fearfully shaken, and having communicated my case to none, the Lord did at last grant some deliverance, and was pleased to calm my soul, not by removing the cause, but by restraining *Satan*; and ceasing himself to let out his hand against me : I got a negative peace that I was not troubled, but lived as I wont for a year after that, until the same temptation occurred again. 'Tis the Lord that raises the wind and storm, and that calms them again; and, Oh what a mercy and power, that ever my conscience should be clear of such a storm ! it is yet a wonder unto me : if he give peace who can trouble ? let never any despair after me, tho' he were certain of hell ; the gladdest word I could hear was, that my sins were pardonable, and that there was a possibility to be saved. In no case man is to despair, God can help in every case.

A *third* wonderful providence happened to me a year thereafter upon the same occasion. One sabbath-day at night I had made some vows in my last trouble, that I would seek God more diligently than I had done ; but, when the Lord's arrows were out of my reins, I forgot what I promised, and turned as bad as ever, being seduced with carnal company at the college : but the Lord gave me an awaking ; for the sermon I had heard, being a relation of some under terrors of conscience, and their sad condition, had some impressions on my spirit, so as by nine o'clock in my bed, recalling to mind my old blasphemy, I thought there was much malice in it and despite : upon which, for the space of some hours, a more violent storm did break out than any I had ever felt ;

felt ; I looked on myself as one that had undoubtedly sinned unpardonably ; I saw in God's countenance terror, wrath, hatred and vengeance ; and some of my natural enmity against the Lord did break out likewise ; so that I struggled, murmured and fretted against God, like the damned in hell, for suffering me to sin unpardonably. Despair and want of hope is terrible ; I was as if in hell ; no visible thing did uphold me, only the secret power of God ; I was in an hourly expectation when *Satan* should come and take me away ; and it was beaten upon me with mighty impression, that I was delivered to the devil. It was impossible for me to pray ; for, in approaching to God I approached to my torment. I sought with sleep to pass away that night, the sorrowfullest that I ever endured, and so to wear away my horrors, and hoped the morning would some way cheer me : but I could not sleep, my horror still increased and hopelessness was the sting of all my evils. It entered into my head once to put hands in myself ; but this temptation did not take, nor sting so much as a hair of my head, but looked on it as a mad thing to torment myself before the time ; it was hell I feared, and should I then run to it ? at last, after much tossing, and hardly praying, it pleased God somewhat to allay my horror with these considerations, which I thought some good spirit suggested unto me ; 1st, Thou knowest not how thou sinned, nor remembers the frame of thy heart at that time, whether thou didst utter these words of blasphemy in rage, or out of unwatchful folly ; and wilt thou then condemn thyself upon uncertainties ; this was rational, but did not calm my heart ; it, like cold water cast on a burning, did for a time ease it, but did not heal, because little of God was here. 2^{dly}, It was suggested

gested to me, that those that had sinned the sin against the holy ghost never thought ill of it, nor rue that they did sin it. It was replied, there may be a ruing and a repenting, because there may be a fearful expectation which may make them rue what they have done *3dly*, At length the Lord brake in with this, it is certain, that these who have sinned the sin against the holy ghost can never sincerely repent. Yes, said I, that is true. Well, said the Lord, take but this counsel: suspend for a time judging of yourself, neither concluding that your sin is pardonable or not, till you see whether God will give repentance or not; and therefore, while the Lord spares your life, try him with this, and seek repentance of him: If he give grace, then mayst thou be certain and infallibly perswaded that thou hast not sinned this sin; but, if not, and that God give you not repentance, you may conclude that you have sinned it, and will be damned, and your impenitency will damn you however: to despair will do no good, and by this course you can be no worse than you are; tho' thy condition be already desperate, what lovest thou by this? you may get some peace in the mean time. This prevailed; and the Lord by it calmed my spirit, so as within a few days all the impressions of this temptation were worn away: but I little minded to endeavour repentance.

4. During this time I lived in diverse sins; as, *1st*, In seeking and living in pleasures. *2dly*, Omitting of duties, and excellent occasions of powerful sermons that were at that time preached by the ablest men in the kingdom; as likewise I neglected to improve the society of godly christians. *3dly*, Neglecting my book and mispending my time. *4thly*, Continuing in a course of enmity against the most godly, and defaming them sometimes falsely.

fallſly. *5thly*, Playing at unlawful games, as cards, dice, and other lotteries, and that in a place where ſevere laws were made againſt them. *6thly*, Deſaming of my neighbours with paſquils and light poems. *7thly*, Carnal and light in my converſation. *8thly*, Waſting and ſpending much money unneceſſarily. *9thly*, And once overtaken with drunkenneſs, fourteen days e'er I was converted.

5. From all this I learn, 1ſt, the time of youth is the moſt fit ſeaſon to ſeek God. I found much tractableneſs in my ſelf while I was young, Lam. iii. 27. Eccl. xii. 1. *2dly*, That the beſt mean under heaven for ſeaſoning young ones with the knowledge of God is the admonition, care and watchfullneſs of ſuperiors; this was the only thing that did me good, Eph. vi. 4. Gen. xxiii. 19. Deut. vi. 7. *3dly*, That the Lord doth uſually bleſs this mean with ſucceſs when it is made conſcience of Gen. xviii. 19. *Abraham* ſhall teach his children, and they ſhall keep my commandments. The pains of others upon me had ſome effect upon my ſpirit, even whilſt much did not appear to others. *4thly*, There is a day of Chriſt's power; religion hath a time: theſe who are now ſtamp'd with hell, were then profeſſing ſomewhat, and going about the means, and ſtrict in obſerving the Lord's day, Eccl. iii. 1 Every one got a touch of the wind of God's ſpirit. *5thly*, God is at much pains with ſinners ordinarily e'er he draw them fully, wholly and effectually to himſelf. I was far from conversion at this time; only I learned that there was a certain glorious eſtate of grace to which ſome were brought, and that I was a ſtranger unto it. Rev. iii. 20. He ſtands and knocks. Iſa. v. 4. *What more could be done to my vineyard? Tho' there was no more, ſurely I am much bound to the Lord for his pains he takes on me.* *6thly*,
Go

God is good to the unthankful and evil when they
 re in extremity. He heareth the cry of nature,
 and did hear me in my extremity when I cried to
 him, Pſal. cvii. 17, 18, 19. Iſa. lvii. 17, 18, 19.
8thly, Let never any man upon any account ne-
 glect the uſe of prayer, or other means, tho' it
 ſeem to be never ſo unreaſonable; for againſt hope,
 ſenſe and reaſon, when I was put to prayer, tho'
 there was nothing but the cries of the oppreſs'd
 nature, it was not in vain, 1 Kings xxi. 29. Pſal.
 xxviii. 36; 37, 38. 2 Kings xiii. 4, 5. *8thly*,
 'Tis ordinary to ſeek to other phyſicians and
 means, and to reſt on and cloſe with them, e'er
 there be a coming to Chriſt, Hoſ. v. 13. *9thly*,
 All falſe reſts will fail, and gilded grace will wear
 away, and muſt do ſo without Chriſt; partly be-
 cauſe of their decaying nature, 1 Pet. i. 24. *All*
theſe is as graſs, and the glory thereof withereth; part-
 ly becauſe, while theſe continue green and freſh,
 the ſoul will not ſeek to come to Chriſt: none of
 theſe bad grounds came to perfection, Mat. xiii:
10thly, A ſoul that is a ſtranger to God and true
 converſion, may get and receive ſome great fa-
 vours and deliverance at the Lord's hand, and
 may have particular and clear experiences of the
 Lord's power and goodneſs, as *Hagar*, and may
 be therewith affected, Gen. xvi. 13. *11thly*, None
 can be ſo bad but they may be worſe; there is no
 bounding or term of ſin, 1 Kings xxi. to 16th v:
12thly, I find the neglect or careleſs performance
 of private duties, eſpecially Meditation and prayer,
 have ever a great influence on all the decays
 that happen to a perſon, Exod. xvii. 11. Pſal. lvi:
 Mat. xxvi. 41.

CHAP. III.

Declaring the way and manner of my conversion, and of some things that happened then and immediately thereafter.

SECT. I.

Of the conversion itself.

1. **A**Bout the time that the related providences happened unto me, and being at the university, and being at the age of seventeen or eighteen years, our Minister proposed to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's supper, of which he gave warning the sabbath proceeding the celebration thereof, I purposed (I know not upon what ground) to partake thereof. I had always a reverend esteem of that ordinance, and was under the deep impressions of eating and drinking my own damnation: I knew I was in an unconverted condition, and that, if betwixt that day and the next Lord's day I were not converted, that I would draw on myself a very grievous evil, and that eating unworthily I might give over hopes of ever thereafter be converted: the Lord did therefore put it in my mind, both by ordinary and extraordinary means, to do my utmost endeavour to win to a converted condition; nor was I of the judgment that conversion was within the compass of my own power, but I hoped, that, doing diligence, the Lord might help; and for this cause set to work immediately, beseeching God that he would once effectually work upon my spirit, seeing all former means had been used in vain. I went to sermon, and I found a better relish in the sermon than I had wont to find, and had an ear to hearken
more

more attentively than at other times : after we were out of church I spent the rest of the day in spiritual exercises, and so was continuing very diligent seeking the Lord, growing daily in the knowledge and love of his ways ; seeing a beauty, and having a relish that I never knew before. Books

discourses of practical divinity were only food, and so were spiritual exercises ; I had now tasted of the wine, but had not bought it.

But on *Wednesday* by six o'clock at night, finding by marks I had read in books that I was converted, and not getting that extraordinary strength I expected, and withal fully resolved to take of the sacrament, I feared that I should receive and drink damnation to my own soul, and that the remedilessness of my condition would be out of doubt. Sometimes I thought that I would suspend communicating at that time ; but, if this resolution had prevailed, I would not have troubled myself with religion at that time :

this was the day of my visitation, and this made me take pains even to eat and drink worth-

Therefore, hoping still for some good, I continued in my resolution ; but, as I said, when I saw all in vain, and that I met not with what I expected, tho' I met with more than ever I did before, discouragements did quite overwhelm me, and fears of drawing on more guilt did load me ; and, withal, this apprehension lay heavy on me, and haunted me like a ghost, that it was in God's hand never to do me good : so that fear, discouragement, vexation, despair, and some horror and grief, did all take hold of me. I resolved to set the next day apart for fasting, and therein to seek God, hoping that these extraordinary means might do something. Hanging therefore by this all thread, I went to prayer with many sad complaints ;

complaints; and the Lord, while I was like prodigal son yet a great way off, ran to meet I address'd myself to speak to the Lord Christ and then was there a gospelview given me of I and some considerations and representation Christ were brought into my mind, that he the mediator, a friend and saviour to poor sinners, their only helper, the way and the truth and the life that died for them, and one willing to be reconciled. What shall I say? while I was exercis'd, a marvelous light shined on my understanding, and with the eyes of my mind, not of my body, I saw that just one in his glory and love and offices, and beauty of his person; such a sight I never did see any thing like it, and which so swallowed me up as I turned speechless, and said, what is this? and where am I now? the glory, love and loveliness of Jesus, revealed to me did very far exceed all that ever I saw or could see in the world, inasmuch that there was no comparison; I was drawn by this: and after I recovered I said, O Lord, thou hast overcome me! heart and hand, and all that I have, is thine. I am content to live and die with thee. Begone poor world and beggarly vanities, and despiteful Devil and flesh, I will serve you no longer. I know now of a master and lover, to whom henceforth I will dedicate myself. Now are all my doubts loosed; and now I see that I have not sinned the sin against the holy ghost. What shall I now do for the Lord? let heaven and earth, angels and Men praise him; for he hath loved me graciously upon me, and that in my low condition. What am I or my father's house, that I should be cast on me? there followed to me this such liberty as I thought I could spend the whole night in prayer. Now was I perswaded

that I was converted, and was come to that pitch which I formerly wanted ; and all the clouds vanished which were betwixt the Lord and my soul. This continued in its strength only for a quarter of an hour, and then is abated as to its measure, tho' not altogether ; but something remained. After I rose from prayer, I went to the fields, and there sang songs of triumph : I comforted myself in my new condition, and prophesied to myself much more, seeing these were but the beginnings : nor did I think that my happiness could be equalled by any ; and now was I fully content to communicate. I longed for some quiet place to pour out my soul unto the Lord, for I thought he would return again ; but he did it not. I bore the first repulse, hoping at last that the Lord would return : all scruples, fears and doubts were vanished. I went to bed ; and when I was laid down, now, said I, sleep securely, and so thou mayst seeing thou art reconciled to God. Never could I do it one night before ; but now let heaven and earth go together. I thought now no scriptures for me but such as were directed to saints, and therefore read some chapters of the second epistle of Peter, but found little life : this did shake me. I read some on Isaac Ambrose, and some marks he had of worthy communicants, of faith, love and knowledge, and the evidence of the spirit coming. I thought I had these marks ; yet the withdrawing of my life and glory raised doubts in me, until by prayer again I got some of the glory of Christ seen, which revived me ; and I was much affected with reading *Isaac Ambrose his new birth*, and I thought there was never any thing so sweet.

SECT. II.

Of some temptations and clouds which thereafter followed, and how delivered out of them.

1. **T**HE Lord withdrawing that comfortable presence which I enjoyed before, humbled me very much ; and mists began to arise, and the sky to darken : but that which indeed raised my exercise to some height, was reading on *Shepherd's found believer* ; wherein he describes the manner of true conversion : and as I read, I apprehended that God had not dealt thus with me, and that I had not found such a work on my spirit as he describes (this was thro' misunderstanding him) and therefore that I was not as yet converted ; and therefore that my communicating would be still an eating unworthily : and seeing what I met with was not Christ, I knew not who he might be, or what I should do ; and so was turned desperate. This wrought sorrow in my heart for a natural condition, and I sought the Lord in heaviness of heart ; and indeed was not idle : but discouragements increased, and still nothing but absence, insomuch as I thought my condition worse than ever. I sought the Lord night and day, as much thro' sense of the danger of the want of him, as thro' any thing else ; but all would not do : neither weekly sermons, books, counsels or prayers, could draw Jesus till his hour was come. I was then but ignorant, and knew not how to live by faith ; and, wanting sense, was discouraged. The Sabbath came, on which the sacrament was to be given ; my fears and sorrows increased, and I was tempted not to communicate. There was one Mr. R. B. serving the tables ; he
 proposed

ied an objection which some doubting christ-
 night have : *Many will say, saith he, Oh ! I
 draw on more guilt in my communicating.
 Oh ! said he, would to God that there were many
 judgement ! but I will tell thee, poor doubting
 whether thou mayst come or not : tell me, wast
 king Christ or not this week ? Yes : with I quiet-
 is like thou hast found something then : and did
 drop in myrrhe in the lock of the door of thy
 er he went away ? know it, poor soul, he will
 gain, for that is his token ; and thou mayst come
 nd in his name I invite thee. This drew me
 ie, tho' I found no sensible presence at the
 and thereupon ensued great fears. Yet
 ne Mr. R. B. did in the afternoon encour-
 : again, so as I resolved to pluck up my
 again.*

finding these discouragements did no good ;
 at comforting of my heart did no ill, did
 : to cheer myself, and used some general en-
 ing considerations to myself, and therewith
 me way strengthened to go about my gene-
 work. Thou art now engaged to be the
 servant ; wait upon him, and trust thy re-
 into him. This advice did no ill. There-
 ermons were very sweet unto me, and so
 ie exercise of all spiritual duties, so as I grew
 knowledge of the ways of God ; and the
 I knew, I was the more delighted in him :
 spiritual duty did relish with me, and I was
 ell but when out of one duty into another ;
 he most cold prayers and discourses anent
 uests were sweet, and opportunities of pray-
 l getting good were highly prized by me.
 in within a month's time thereafter to be
 slack ; but the Lord warned me of it, and I
 ed my pace.

3. Thus was the everlasting seed sown that was the light of glory then arising upon my soul : but this did not long continue ; for thereafter shortly there arose a more grievous storm, and of longer continuance than any I had met with yet : for, the sacrament being to be given in the town about that time, I resolved to partake thereof, to see if I could get any thing from God ; and for this cause prepared myself diligently, and went about the work of self-examination : but being but young, and having small experience of my own heart, I could get little clearness ; however this exercise stirred up some things ready to die in me, and I did still grow in the knowledge and love of the truth ; until one afternoon, which I had set apart for seeking of God, I was reading on Luke xxii. chap. where Christ did eat the passover with his Disciples ; and reading these words (*and the twelve apostles with him*) I know not how it came to pass, but, reflecting on my deadness in reading such love as this, I concluded I had no grace ; and withal observing how Christ was so familiar with his apostles, and how unkind to me, the apprehensions of distance and separation from Christ were so fearful, that incontinently the wind was up very boisterous, and I was brought again to the rack. Then did my evil nature discover itself to me, and then did I murmur and fret against God, that was so kind to others, and yet kept such distance with me : I envied, as I thought, the very apostles with some despite, as I conceived. Fretting and murmuring did but like rain increase the floods, and nowise abate them ; so that in sorrow and bitterness of heart I walked up and down for want of God whom I could not find, nor knew how to seek, and under the sensible apprehensions of his wrath and of an unconver-

ted

condition. All these things, with the fear of my spirit, did put me in great hope: that I utterly lost almost all hope: but winds thro' some process of time were calmed in one of my calm fits I read on *Shepherd's sincere convert*, this being the first time I ever read it; I had not read four leaves of him when thrown on my back: the first arrow that struck in my reins, and went into my heart, was these words, *the children of God do nothing for bell; they lothe to live like slaves in Bridewall, like dogs for fear of the whip.* Upon this my acting was discovered, and therefore I concluded that wanting that kingly spirit that acts love, which indeed as then did not appear, under a strong fit of the spirit of bondage; not finding this, I concluded I was yet in *ill of Bitterness*. I went after dinner thro' the fields, and read that book all through; and the power of God was present: and reading what hypocrites might come, and the sadness of unconverted condition, and the great difficulty of saving conversion, I was wounded here and through; my condition was now harder than ever, and I was brought to a certain conclusion; only I knew not what to think of the glorious sight I had of Christ: but, as I read 1 John, I was put out of that doubt. In the author's discourse of a false spirit, which is that by which a false peace is begotten; he defines it, and compares it with the spirit of God; saying, *that as the spirit of God doth humble, so doth the false spirit; and that this false spirit doth not reveal Christ, and fill the soul with glorious operations of him; so that the man seems to be awapt away, and hence cries, my Lord, and my God.* This is all thou met with, said my conscience;

this did put the business out of all doubt, and I counted what I met with formerly but a delusion of Satan : and here all props were taken away, and by this means a breach was made to all temptations to enter in ; and the devil seeing his time, entred in with a whole sea of horrors. Then was brought to my mind my old sin of blasphemy again, and vehemently urged that I had sinned the sin against the holy ghost ; which with such violence he pressed, as I could get nothing spoken for myself. And that which did heighten all this was, that the law brake in upon me, *that sin might become exceeding sinful, and wrought in me all manner of disobedience* ; for my heart murmured, fretted and swelled against God for guiding me thus ; and, having terrible apprehensions of him, I could not love him : and now, said conscience, see how thou smelst already of hell ; how canst thou imagine that God will look upon thee that hast such a cursed nature ? the brand of the reprobate is upon thee ; why wilt thou therefore pray or hope any more ? yet notwithstanding would I pray, and that frequently ; I know not what put me out to it. Many times did I grovel on the ground, and sought his favour, pity and compassion ; then was it that my tears were my meat ; then was prayer bitterness to me, and my mouth closed, and I as it were bound with bands ; for God was never more terrible than when I approached to him in prayer. I remember, one day, praying out in the fields, I had this expression ; Lord, said I, if thou wilt for nothing else compassionate me, yet compassionate my young years ; and yet I know not how thou canst break thy faithful word, who hast said that such as sin against the holy ghost *shall never be pardoned*. Nature seeks its own preservation, and therefore, having no other shift

to make, I applied myself to the Lord only : and now my greatest trouble was concerning the unpardonableness of my sins, especially that particular sin of blasphemy ; yet would my spirit calm betwixt hands, and be at ease for a while. I thought the devil had a great hand in my temptations : for said I, while I was walking after the flesh, there was nothing of this seen or heard ; but since I have come to and engaged with Christ, and followed his ways, is all this come upon me ; 'tis not likely that this in wrath, or from God. I continued in the extremity of this condition but a few days, never opening my case to any, being bashful : I was sent for by my relations upon some emergent occasion that did fall out ; I was glad of the opportunity, because by that means I should shun the sacrament that was to be given about that time ; but, coming there, my temptations and horrors increased ; I thought every creature happy but myself ; meat, drink and company were a burden unto me.

4. That which did mainly trouble me was my particular sin of blasphemy, which did in my apprehension render my condition helpless and hopeless. *2dly*, The evil and terribleness of a natural condition, and the exceeding great difficulty of saving conversion. *3dly*, The swelling and raging of my heart with hatred and enmity against God, *that sin might become exceeding sinful*, Rom. vii. 7. *4thly*, This was a terrible consideration, and took away the comfort of all means, that all I did was sinful, because it did proceed from me ; and therefore I was many times dung back from prayer by this, why comest thou to him, who hates and lothes every work of thy hands ? *5thly*, *Unsuccessfulness* of means for a long time, whereby I concluded my case to be desperate, and no
cure

cure for it at all. 6thly, These words sounded terribly in my heart, and were violently beaten in upon me, *God will damn thee, he has decreed it, 'tis impossible it should be otherwise.* 7thly, The consideration of the great number that should be damned, and the paucity of such as should be saved. 8thly, My great frustrating in respect of former enjoyments, Psal. cii. 10. *He hath raised me up, and cast me down.* 9thly, Terrible dreams and night-visions of hell and judgement. 10thly, Fearful apprehensions of God, who was represented to me as a consuming fire, and an angry judge. Upon all this, *lastly*, ensued a terrible despair, prophesying that things would never be better. Hell did not trouble me much, but God's wrath, and separation from him, did ly heaviest on me; and this was the evil that I did see and feel in sin: the devil's end in afflicting with a particular sin was to cause me despair, and to take off my thought of any other consideration.

5. While I was thus hopeless and helpless, not knowing what to do; to aggravate all my miseries, I was to hear a dead lifeless preacher: ah, and must I, said I, have this with all my evils, to come under a dead ministry? but I went with the rest thinking it indifferent whom I heard, seeing I saw it beyond the power of means to help me. The text was, 1 Tim. i. 1. *Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ.* I went betwixt sermons to a secret place, and there poured out my soul to God in prayer; but no refreshing. I came unto the afternoon's sermon again; but, behold the Lord's goodness! from an unexpected hand, and from so general a text, and at such an unexpected time, the Lord did send a calm, and did that which I thought was impossible, viz. clear me fully (when I was capable of nothing less, and after all my con-

siderations

SECT. III.

For things relating to my conversion, and the Lord's dealing with me, considered.

I Look upon this as the time of my conversion, and that then the everlasting seed was sown; that heaven was begun, and Christ formed in me, upon these considerations, 1st, Because my heart changed as to my company; I was the most strict before, but now I immediately found I loved and delighted most in the strictest holy and strict people; so that the persons whom before I heeded upon the account of some obligations, I now loved and followed: and this love was universal, so as, when either I heard tell of a godly man, or saw him, my heart warmed; 2^{dly}, the love of the brethren I look on as a sign that I am translated from death to life, 1 John iii. 14. 3^{dly}, Because I found a new esteem of, a great delight in, and love to, and longing after all the ordinances of Christ and his commands; I saw a glory in them, I relish'd them, every thing that was poured out of God was sweet, 1 Pet. ii. 2. which I never found before. 4^{dly}, Because I found my heart at that instant mortified to the world, and my esteem of and delight in it gone, 1 John ii. 15. 5^{thly}, Because my soul did see, esteem, love and delight in the Lord Jesus above all, and preferred him not only to the world, but to the saints, duties and ordinances; and made a perpetual, cordial and personal covenant to live with him and love him, Psal. lxxiii. 25, 26. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. 6^{thly}, I found a glorious, universal and abiding change, wrought by the Lord himself, *from sin and Satan to God, and from darkness to light*, 2 Cor. v.

siderations had been in vain) that I had n
 ned unpardonably, from these words wh
 cited in his sermon, *Howbeit God forgave*
cause I did it ignorantly and in unbelief. Th
 said, whatever thy sins have been, they hav
 done in unbelief, or whilst thou wast an un
 er, when thou knew nothing of God, the
 were not done ignorantly, all thy sins wer
 mitted in a time when there was not so
 as a common work of the spirit, produ
 common temporary faith. This was er
 God may make any thing strong to do his
 The devil and all his storms were rebuke
 calmed, and that suddenly, and so fully,
 was never thereafter assaulted with temptat
 sinning against the holy ghost. My hea
 made holy, and I put on a full resolution
 the Lord till I should find him, and do all
 power for this effect: and now I had good
 seeing my sins were pardonable; and thi
 produced a cheerful endeavour to seek the
 which I did, and was labouring to do goo
 others, and to spread the knowledge of Ch
 which means I daily grew in the knowled
 love of God. The books I most read or
Shepherd, Fenner, and Practice of Piety, and
sion of Faith; God did bless all to me, tho'
 not to my own apprehensions converted, bu
 ing for some glorious manifestation of
 which should suddenly, and fully and f
 change me; and, waiting for this, I contin
 this case for the space of a month.

17. *All things were then new.* 6thly, I was carried with a great zeal for the Lord against all sin and sinners; and did strive to draw all men to Christ, by instructing and exhorting them, Prov. x. 21. *The lips of the righteous feed many;* and, Luke xxii. 32. *When thou art converted, strengthen others.* Then, 7thly, I found a new light discovering to me the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and making me from that time forward to understand the scriptures, the exercise of saints recorded in scripture; and I delighted not only in the history or relation of the scripture, but in the prophecies, promises, doctrines and spiritual part thereof, which I never relish'd before, Prov. ii. 10. and iii. 9. Then was wisdom and her ways pleasant, and became plain to me, which were before locked up and a mystery, Matth. xiii. 11. 8thly, In respect of the Lord's after-dealing with me, and of his former dealing; for he was preparing me before, and dinging me out of my false rests. And ever thereafter, altho' there have been temptations and shakings and interruptions, yet hath that spark never died which was kindled, but hath been growing at last, more and more; some good ever remained, and, in my forest decays, the impressions of God's dealing at this time remained, so as there was a longing after the first husband, which was a means to reduce me out of backsliding condition: And therefore I look upon it as the *well of water springing up to everlasting life*; and that, in that respect of the remaining seed. I think I am *born of God*, 1 John iii. 9. hypocrites rejoice but for a season.

2. I have looked on the Lord's dealings towards me, and what this manifestation of himself in such a manner as I never had the like all my life might speak to me, and what might be the ends

ends thereof; and, after enquiry, I found them to be, *1st*, To draw the soul to God by faith and love. He lets us taste his wine that it may be bought; and therefore is there a *Seeing of the Son* and a *Believing on him*, John vi. 40. and xx. 29. Oh love and come to this glorious One, and, having discovered him to be the *Lord of glory*, *open the everlasting doors*, Psal. xxiv. 7, 9. yea, and when this love is dead, quicken it again, by remembering him. *2dly*, To strengthen our faith in his love, and our hope of heaven; and therefore hath he given this testimony of his love, revealing to me that rare fight hid from the world, to be a pledge and earnest of heaven; and upon this to build and strengthen my faith, both in drawing near to him, and expecting all good from him. This revelation of Jesus, enlightning, comforting and sanctifying, is to me the earnest of the inheritance, and seal of the Spirit mentioned Eph. i. 13, 14. 2 Cor. i. 22. *Which is the earnest of our inheritance.* *3dly*, To comfort me in my choice, shewing I have not cast away all for shadows, and what I am to expect in heaven, of which already I have tasted, 1 Cor. ii. 12. *Eye hath not seen, &c.* *4thly*, To manifest and make known himself in his condescending power and glory, of which I might doubt if I had not seen with mine own eyes. Why should I doubt of this his power, when I have myself seen such a miracle, the blind eye opened, the dead heart quickened, and the heart wholly changed? *He that believeth hath the witness in himself*, 1 John v. 10. Oh to be raised from hell to heaven!

3. I have likewise been thinking what this storm immediately ensuing upon this should mean; and my being cast down to hell, after lifting up to heaven. *1st*, To let me see the evil of mine own heart,

rt, and exceeding sinfulness thereof, which in
 h. a degree I never saw before; and by the
 rmuring and rising of my heart, and fierce re-
 nance I made, I perceive that by nature I am
 itter enemy to God, and a toad full of poison
 l venom : to humble me, and to acknowledge
 grace and love the more, Job i. 11. 2 Chron.
 xii. 31. *2dly*, To be a ground of faith when
 like straits and cases again, and to have a proof
 his power; the Lord in my extremity, when
 re was no appearance of help, when there
 s nothing in me but frowardness and rebellion,
 en I cried, yet pitied me, conquering both
 r sin and misery : and why should I doubt him
 w again? he ever helped me when in extremi-
 yea, when my case was most desperate, Rom.
 4. 1 Sam. xvii. 37. 2 Tim. iv. 17, 18. 2 Cor.
 10. Psal. lxxiii. 7. *3dly*, to acquaint me with
 : Lord's ways of conversion, and with his ter-
 s, that I might thereby be a better guide unto
 iers, and be made more serious, 2 Cor. i. 4.
 1. v. 14. Psal. xxxiv. 4, 5, 6, 14. *4thly*, That
 d might by me shew a pattern of all longfuf-
 ing, who obtained mercy being so wild, 1 Tim.
 16. *5thly*, To shew his justice as he is the go-
 vernor of the world. I was very wicked, and by
 law deserved severe punishment; I trampled
 God's kindness and goodness : and therefore
 d the righteous Lord make me find sin bitter,
 d for this cause delivered me over to Satan;
 : took me in his own hand and corrected me,
 t willing that I should die and be condemned
 ther with or for the world, 1 Cor. xi. 32.
 Sam. xii. 13, 14. *6thly*, To hold out and re-
 resent (to others) the Lord's goodness, love and
 undescendancy, that by this experience of his
 ve my heart might be endeared to him, Psal.

cxvi. 1. *I will love the Lord because he hath heard my prayers.* Which love of his was kyth'd in delivering me from so great depths so unexpectedly and by himself, and so fully and clearly after all means had been used in vain; and to me who was so ignorant and wild, and by my unbelief and murmuring more wild, yet he came over all, and freed me from my fears, Isa. lvii. 16, 17, 18. 7thly, To ding out the bottom of that temptation, and to pluck it out by the roots, whereby I was made to believe that I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost; which the Lord did now so fully and clearly, that I never after was troubled with it: and this was all Satan gained by this encounter. 8thly, I think it was a mean to make me live by faith, and to spean me from sense, 1 Pet. i. 24, 25. seeing by experience I found that all these sensible glories are but grafs that withers, and so not to be leaned on; but the Lord's word endureth for ever.

4. I will conclude with remarking some instructions and lessons I learned from these providences. 1st, 'Tis more sure to live by faith than by sense; the life of sense is a life of uncertainty, exposed to assaults, 2 Cor. v. 7. 1 Pet. i. 24. 2dly, There is ordinarily in the day of espousals something extraordinary of God's love and glory manifested; the fatted calf is killed when the prodigal is brought home, Luke xv. 22. 23. No less can assure them of their father's love, nor take away their wildness, and make them comply with their new life: hence, Hos. ii. 15. *make thee sing as in the days when I brought thee out of the land of Egypt.* 3dly, The soul in conversion closeth chiefly with the person of Christ, Jer. ix. 1. *If thou wilt return, return to me; and the not doing hereof is complained of, Hos. vii. 16.*

return, but not to the most high. 4thly, Grace is a great, wonderful and universal change, giving the outward life and inward frame, r. v. 17. *All things are new*; new prayers, love, new company, new opinions and new principles: a man is much different from what as, not only while a profane man, but even a civil or moral man under some common

5thly, One main way by which a gracious is kythed is in love to the saints, and join with them. Acts ix. 26. converted Paul effected to join himself with the disciples. 6thly, there may be much corruption to be mortified in a soul newly brought into God, and under flashes: for notwithstanding of all this diligence, delight in duties and joy, I was full of ignorance, unbelief; selfish, proud, conceited and

Grace is indeed but small when it begins, xviii. 3. Mark. iv. 31: unknown to themselves; little faith, patience and rooted love, though flashes there may be. 7thly, The Lord is sweetly and gently; and, in the work of conversion, much of his love, of his power and his glory is shewed and expressed in that act of work, John x. 16. and vi. 44, 45. Hof.

4. The work of conversion hath much of engraven on it. 8thly, Greatest flowings greatest ebbings, Psal. cii. 10. *Thou hast reared me up, and cast me down.* Mat. iii. 17. with iv. 1. 2 Cor. xii. 4, 7. 9thly, Sudden and ordinary flashes of joy and spiritual enlargements are more dangerous, and not so firm, as which is less sensible and attained by degrees and pains. The bad ground received the word of joy, and sprang up suddenly; but the good ground brings forth fruit with patience, Luke viii. and Mat. xiii. 20. 10thly, Whatever, good

comes suddenly (let it be sincere, or unsound as to but an appearing good) will not continue that height, but these tides and inundations will come to their ordinary channel again, some sea and impressions and dippings may remain, but *flesh is grass*, 1 Pet i. 24. *We walk by faith, & not by sight*, 2 Cor v. 7. I had never an extraordinary enlargement, either of joy, strength, sanctification, but the waters dried up. There are no sudden steps in grace; *I will not drive thee out all at once*, Exod. xxiii. 29. *They shall go from strength to strength*, Psal. lxxxiv. 7. *The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven*, that leavens all insensibly Mat. xiii. 33. Be content to get matters wrong by degrees, strength, labour and pains; & murmur not at the tediousness thereof, neither expect great things suddenly; or, if ye meet with some such thing, look not for the continuance thereof, till by degrees ye come up to it. Little difference appearing from a sudden rapt of joy betwixt what is in saints and hypocrites, were wisdom, when we examine our estate, examine rather by the whole course of the life than by one particular work. Continued kindness to the Lord speaks more than any particular enjoyment, tho' never so extraordinary, Psa. xxiii. 6. and xxxvii. 37. *Mark the perfect man*; see what all ends in. Conclude not peremptorily from beginnings of any, either as to good or evil; I could build little on this, if I did see it backed with an after-tract of kindness; else might have thought it the tasting of the pleasures of the world to come. The great visible difference of the good ground from the stony ground was a fruit brought forth to perfection: foolish virgins lamps will go out at last, Mat. x. 12thly, The more pain and the longer continuance

he work of preparation will be of, the deeper ;
 he more solid and glorious the superstructure will
 e, Mat. xiii. 21 *It wanted deepness of earth.*
 3thly, Unbelief and doubting of interest is Satan's
 rst temptation to apostacy, Luke iv. 3. Heb.
 i. 12. Jer. ii. 28 Lam. i. 9. for I found, when
 belief came, it made a breach for all other e-
 ls. 14thly, Legal terrors in themselves tend to
 il, tho' God accidentally drives good in them ;
 and therefore not to be simply desired or cherished,
 John iv. 18. Gal. iv. 24, 30. Rom. vii. 9. yet
 e Lord brings *meat out of the eater.* 15thly, One
 in evil young converts are subject unto, is mis-
 ces (as we may see by scripture examples and
 r experiences) especially anent the nature of
 ictification and God's love, which, until clear-
 , is matter of sad exercise. I had many mis-
 ces, which were as breaches leaving me open
 ntinually, and for many years, to the assaults
 the enemy ; of which I will speak afterwards.
 16thly, Not one remarkable circumstance of pro-
 vidence wherewith his people are trysted, whether
 eet or sour, good or evil, but in the end proves
 ere was mercy in it, Psal. xxv. 10. *All his*
ways are mercy and truth to them that fear him ;
 17thly, Unbelief misconstruing all, appears not, yet
 is so, and God usually discovers it after many
 ys : for, after a long while reflecting on times
 st, I saw in them so much of God, that I never
 fore considered, that I found matter of bless-
 ing God for all, Rom. viii. 28. *All things work*
for Good ; even their sins and desertions 17thly,
 od himself is more eminently seen, in the mer-
 ces of his people, than instruments ; and there-
 re ordinarily none doth good but himself, and
 at *not in the way, thing, manner and time*

they propose unto themselves, but as he prop
There was no strange God with him, Deut. 3
 12. *O people saved by the Lord*, Deut. xxxiii
 Psal. lxxviii. 35. and xviii. 31, 32. 18thly,
 possible folks may meet with more sharp co
 tions after conversion than before, especia
 they have not been well hammered with the
 Heb. x. 32. *After enlightened, endured a great*
of afflictions: Which are not to be confined to
 ward, but inward likewise; *Heman* may still
terrors, Psal. lxxxviii. throughout. A
 question if *Job* ever found such work as after
 I grant they *have not received the spirit of bo*
 (which is one's constant frame) hence *Han*
 called a *Woman of a sorrowful spirit*. Before
 version (except when madness made me re
 death and judgement were continually terribl
 to me, and thro' fear of death was kept all m
 time in bondage, Heb. ii. 15. but now it is f
 fits. A fearer of God may *fit in darkness, and*
no light, Isa. l. 10. But tho' they create se
 and discouragements unto themselves, and
 to swim in these black streams, yet hav
 they received this spirit of bondage, but the
 of adoption, and they may come to God as a
 er: this is their allowance, and the new n
 and seed of grace tend to this; yet preternatu
 and by accident thro' mistakes and corruptic
 is hindered that it vents not itself in these
 motions, and will in end do it; yet, tryed
 dispensations of providence, they may be t
 led with this spirit of bondage: howsoever
 take it and harbour it, yet they received it
 God; *Perfect love casteth out fear*, 1 John i
 it is not their allowance.

CHAP. IV.

*ing some things touching a decay that happened
immediately thereafter.*

ell in a sad decay both of light and life and
onsolation ; the steps of it were.

STEP I.

as unbelief and doubting of my interest in
and of his love, thro' the mistakes of the
re of sanctification, and by a wrong construc-
of providences, and ignorance of the cove-
of grace ; so as I was in *Job's* condition ; tho'
I prayed, and God had answered me, yet
I not believe it ; I could not believe I was
ppy as to be converted : and, having such sad
ghts of myself, I had a bad construction of
and all his ways to me, inasmuch as I
ght God did in wrath take away my terrors.
I said I ; time was when the Lord was taking
with me, and did lay siege with the law a-
ft my soul, at which time I delighted in du-

he put me in his fire and furnace, but now
he take no more care of me ; now hath he
d his siege, and given me over : Oh misera-
nan that I am ! I am left now to the judicial
ue of an hard heart, which hath seized upon

I am to pine out the rest of my days in vani-
in and trouble. And when my heart was in
frame, this, said I, is but to make me secure

I may not fear ; 'tis but a delusion : which
these sad effects upon my soul ; 1st, Strange
hard thoughts of God as of an enemy, Luke

21. Gen. iii. 5. as one that envied over
2dly, I judged all that God said of his
love

love in his word to be but wind at best, or compliments or snares to intrap; and so made him a liar, 1 John v. 10. and by this means was made incapable to be taken with Christ's allurements in the gospel. 3dly, Hence I could neither love nor believe him, nor by any means be drawn to him, 1 Cor. xiii. 7. *Charity believeth all things*: for how could I love him in whom I believed I had no other interest than that of a cruel judge ready to condemn, and watching for evil against me, and that, when his words were smoother than oil? Psa. lv. 21. Zech. xi. 8. 4thly, I had no will to keep communion with him, was wearied of him. When the Israelites said, *we have no portion or inheritance in the son of Jesse, the next was, every man to his tents*, and did quit him. Jer. iii. 19 *Thou shalt call me; thy father, and shalt not depart from me.* 5thly, I was heartless or flight in duties, whereby he was honoured, and communion with him entertained; wanting love and hope, Jer. xviii. 12 Lam. i. 9. Luke xix. 21. *Thou' unbelief my hands were weakened, and I departed from the living God.* 6thly, Finding no satisfaction in God, which I could not do whilst these principles remained, I behoved to have it elsewhere in the creature. Jer. ii. 12. *Forsaking of God the fountain of living waters, and hewing to ourselves broken cisterns*, are joined. 7thly, Sermons did me no good, because not heard with faith, Heb. iv. 2. whereas, if I had believed and trusted in God, I should be strengthened with the joy of his salvation, Neh. viii. 10. Prov. xvii. 22. 2 Cor. ii. 7.

STEP II.

Notwithstanding of all this, I had hopes, that *tho' as yet the Lord had not converted me, yet I might be converted, and therefore did not despair*

pair of it. Some secret thoughts in duties would drop in perswading me to hope, and some relish in duties: as likewise, since I was perswaded by strong hand my sins were pardonable, and that the Lord possibly might pardon; this made me continue in the means. Satan therefore fought to beat me from this, or at least to make me remiss in them; and, knowing that palpable vanities would not do (for I had been burnt with that candle already) therefore would compass this by making me close with an appearance of good; which he did thus: I studied stenography or short-writing, in the study of which, aiming at perfection in it, I was excessive, and so taken up altogether from any other thing, that I could scarce get the form of duties gone about two times a day. In end I resolved to give way, cheated with this, that, the sooner I acquired knowledge hereon, I should the sooner have leisure to wait on God; but however, this spirit of whoredom caused me to err, and took away my heart. This was the second mean of my decay.

STEP III.

When I was called home, thro' want of godly company, and dead formal society among which I lived, I was brought a further length of decay, even to omit duties almost altogether; contenting myself ordinarily with bed-prayers, and slight reading of scripture and godly books. Several things had influence on this; the want of a convenient room, a prevailing spirit of sloth that would not break thro' difficulties, some false hopes that all would be well; sometimes my heart would secretly despair, and prophesy things would never be better, and 'tis in vain to pray; thro' these things it came to pass that my heart turned altogether

gether out of tune, and heeded not my work at all: now had preachings and sermons no relish at all; then did I see that fulfilled, *He that followeth vain persons shall become poor*, Prov. xxviii. 19. 1 Cor. xv. 33. *Evil company corrupteth good manners.*

STEP IV.

Then; thro' want of the fear of God, and unwatchfulness, did I become vain and light in my conversation; I followed lies and vanities; I carded, complied with sinful customs, made no conscience of what company I came into, *inventing to myself instruments of music*, and seeking contentment from the creature. When company was away, my heart turned melancholly, but did not turn to God. I would pray when trysted with any disappointments; but still, thro' interruption, lost more ground than I gained, so as I went daily down the stream; and grew exceeding hard-hearted: spiritual duties were a weariness and a burden; and thus was not only discouraged and remiss in duties, flighting them altogether, but grew very untender and carnal in my conversation.

STEP V.

Which was, going to some relations to pass a visit, where there were many professors and much profession; but there I got a dead stroke, so as it is a wonder however I recovered. In a word, I turned desperate, and said, *There is no hope; I have loved idols and after them I will go*, Jer ii. 25. The grounds of this despair were, 1st, a great and long account of sins that had run up upon me, which I thought would never be pardoned, Jer. ii. 28 2^{dly}, The terrible hard frame of my heart, and great deadness I was in, so that I
thought

thought I would never recover again, John xi.
 9. Ezek. xxxvii. 4. *can these bones live?* Gen.
 xiii. 11, 12. 3dly, Some fruitless vain attempts
 made to recover myself; my strength wasted in
 sin: and hence I said, *This evil is of the Lord,*
and remediless; what should I wait on him any
more? 2 Kings vi. 33. 4thly, The complaints,
 doubts and discouragements of others, and their
 suitable walking up to their principles, who yet
 were eminent for godliness in the estimation of
 others; they went with bowed down backs, and
 spread an ill report to me of the Lord and his
 ways: and therefore were my hands weakened by
 these spies, Num. xiii. 30 5thly, Their unloving
 marriage towards me, and keeping at a distance,
 and taunting me. At another time, seeking to
 join in with them, and to bear the burden of a
 good discourse lest it should die, I was put off
 with a taunt "Tis true, my conversation at that
 time was not gospel-like; yet they had beams in
 their own eyes, and they should have dealt in
 greater meekness with me, and kythed love by a
 kindly reprehension This turned me averse to
 them, and to their way, Ezek xxxiv 21. They
sh'd with horn and fide, and this produced scatter-
 ing 6thly, I was but too much countenanced by
 others, and humoured and complied with; for I
 was given to foolish jesting, and they took but
 too much pleasure in this, and never once gave
 me a friendly warning or reproof, altho' my ways
 were displeasing to them: *The soul that lacketh in-*
struction shall die 7thly, Satan was beating in
 strange temptations on my soul, sometimes telling
 me I was judicially hardened since I could not
 mourn for my sins, and that it was ever so since
 my terrors were removed: and then that place,
 Jer. vi. 10. came to my mind; *make the heart of*
this

this people felt. Sometimes thinking my time was past, and my day gone, and that Christ had given his last knock, and that the door was shut. That place, Prov i. 26. troubled me, *Because I called and ye would not hear, therefore shall ye call and I will not hear;* therefore 'tis in vain now to cry or pray: sometimes Satan said I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, citing Heb. vi. 4. For it is true (was it suggested to me) thy blasphemies were not that sin, because thou didst that in unbelief, and not enlightned; but now thou hast been enlightned, and *tasted of the powers of the world to come*, and hast fallen away, and laid a new foundation from thy dead works for repentance, and therefore 'tis impossible to be renewed again; and this is the sin against the Holy Ghost. This raised not that terror in me which temptations of this kind were wont to do formerly; only made me heartless, and discouraged me: and then would Satan add, dost thou not mark how unmoved thou art with this heavy message, which would cause any other to tremble but thyself? and why art thou not shaken? because the Lord has hardened thee like Pharaoh, that thou canst not hearken; the sentence is past, and the stone is laid upon thy grave; and now all thy life is gone, thou art *twice dead and pluckt up by the roots*. With these thoughts I was dung from duties and their cheerful exercise, with pleasures, company, and want of inward and outward exercise, I was kept in my security and strong bonds.

6. My sins were, *1st*, flighting and omitting of duties public and private. *2^{dly}*, Vain and light conversation like the world; the shew of my countenance witnessed against me. *3^{dly}*, Idle jesting, Eph. v. 4 *4^{thly}*, Breaking of the Sabbath with idleness and mine own words. *5^{thly}*, Following of the lusts of the flesh and divers vanities.

6^{thly},

6thly, Sensuality. 7thly, Doing no good, neither glorifying God, nor edifying others, nor profiting myself. 8thly, Haunting vain company, and not reproving them. 9thly, Sinful customs and recreations, though debated by some; such as healthing, and playing at cards.

7. Notwithstanding of this, the Lord upheld me by his right-hand, and kept in the dying spunk, that all these waters could not quite extinguish it; I fell not totally away, nor was I utterly forsaken of God, Jer. v. 5. For these things remained; 1st, I was put out to pray, meditate and read now and then; I was not put altogether from duties, I did not shew myself to have no knowledge at all, nor not calling on God, Psal. xiv. 4. 2dly, There remained a secret and quiet hope things would be well, and a looking up to him, though *cast down, yet not in despair*, 2 Cor. iv. 8. 3dly, Love and affection to and estimation of the people of God, and delight in them, still remained, so as even then I loved them above others. 4thly, Dissatisfaction with my present condition, groaning under and mourning when I remembered the days of old: this course was not pleasant, I was like a bone out of joint, these matters were not my element. 5thly, Some love to my first husband remained, and a preferring of the first course and life even in its worst before this, even as one prefers the day to the night: and often would I say that word, with Job, *O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shined upon my head!* Job xxix 2, 3, 4. 6thly, I knew that it was ill with me, though I slept, yet I was not so dead as to be without sense or knowledge altogether.

8. God's ends is this, for any thing I can learn, were only to give farther proof of his love, in *renewing his kindness*, in sparing me whilst in this
F condition,

condition, in preserving me from turning away
and in his time graciously reviving me again
much pains and long labour. 2dly, To keep
watchful in time coming, lest a worse thing
come. 3dly, And to let me find the power
and of my original corruption, more fully,
xxxii 31. 4thly, To keep me humble for
ter it, that I may not *open the mouth*, Ezek

9. These things had influence on me
mainly, 1st, Want of outward and inward
trials: I had *no changes, therefore feared*.
Psal. lv. 19. The spurs were out of my sin-
ners were away, which drove me to duty in
respect of the decay of that inward fire
which accompanied duty formerly; God
brought me out of Egypt into the wilderness
withdrawn that: And, wanting these by-
I fell in my walk, *For this Moses, we know
is become of him*, Exod. xxxii 1. 3dly, The
process of time the spirits wearied, and
pressions of things did wear away; and
wearied, I desired sleep: *They rejoiced in
for a season*, John v 35. and, as the Galatians
run well at the break. 4thly, Many temptations
from within and from without, which they
kept up before. Now the Lord let out
original corruption, and I found nothing but
hard heart from within, and discouragement
without, and this made the way more hard.
The powerful means were removed; the
company and powerful sermons were gone
did feed me. 6thly, Godless company took
no grace, with which I was trusted, that did
all religion out of me. 7thly, The formal
and lifeless conversation of some (much cry
professors made me even despair as it were.
Too eagerly following of lawful comforts, &

nd studies. 9thly, Growing remiss in
cise of duties, especially of private prayer
itation. 10thly, Not looking to ills in
nning, but letting them run on; not
things, or considering my ways, but
and therefore became my garden over-
ith thorns. 11thly, Want of knowledge
ciples; whereby I became over credulous,
ieved every thing that was suggested.
Unbelief and discouragements; whereby
ided all lost and desperate, and God a
ster, and that I was not yet converted:
heart of unbelief in departing from God, Heb.
13thly, Taken up with lesser matters, and
cised with weighty truths and duties; ta-
with trials of grace, and not exercised
amon principles. 14thly, Living by sense,
by faith.

observe these things from this decay of
ft, 'Tis ordinary, and an evil to be watch-
ft, to fall away from that measure saints
at their first conversion, Rev. ii. 4, 5.
st fallen from thy first love. Temptations
nd God withdraws his strength and com-
d in procefs of time the spirits weary, and
eds fainting. 2dly, Saints fall not away
something still remaineth, 1 John iii. 9.
l remaineth in him. Cant. v. 2. *My heart*
3dly, Whatever the decay of saints be,
Lord ordinarily recovers them out of it a-
bo' they fall, they shall arise, Mic. vii. 8 The
ing virgins were at last awakened, Matth.
7. Unbelief, especially in passing hard
s on our own estate, and doubting of our
the first and greatest cause of apostasy,
. 12. therefore Satan tempted Christ with
; *If thou be the Son of God*, Jer. ii. 25. *There*

is no hope, we have loved idols. 5thly, A Christian thrives as he keeps up correspondence with God in private duties; especially secret prayer, Matth. xxvi. 41. *Pray, lest ye enter into temptation.* Exod. xvii. 11. 6thly, A backslider ordinarily goeth a great length e'er he recover, Jer. ii. 5. *They have deeply revolted, they have gone far from me.* 7thly, Saints are drawn from God by appearances of good, by seeming temptations; they are beguiled in the use of lawful comforts. We should watch much against this; *A tree to be desired to make one wise.* 8thly, Backsliding and spiritual apostasy comes by degrees; he falls not all at once. Mat. xxv. The virgins first slumbered, then slept; hence it is called *Backsliding*: A man quietly slides from God. 9thly, No means can reclaim a backsliding soul, nor make the ebbing soul flow, until the Lord's hour come: 'Tis a stroke of Omnipotence that makes the fever turn; no physician can stop the issue, Hos. xiv. 4. 'Tis God that healeth backslidings. 10thly, A man may contract in a way of backsliding such evils very quickly, that he will not for a long time get quite rid of: sins and decays are very hard to cure. 11thly, Persons are ordinarily very secure, and quiet and sleeping in a decaying condition; they sleep while the Son of man is betrayed to sinners. 12thly, Sense and affections, without knowledge, do expose a soul to many evils, and make their case very uncertain and unstable: *Children in understanding* 1 Cor. xiv. 20. *are tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine,* Eph. iv. 14. 13thly, A fiery temptation may be suspended and calmed; but, until it be cured by the word, it will return again. All the time of this decay, my temptation of sinning the sin against the Holy Ghost did never recur, in respect it was once cured by the word. 14thly, Ill company, and peace
in

the world, are ill attendants of a backslider, Prov i. 32. *The prosperity of fools destroys them.* Oh is sad when carnal company and a soul departing from God tryt together; *We to him that is alone,* Job. iv. 10. 15thly, A carnal generation of professors is greatly abominable to the Lord, and great plagues in the earth, especially to young beginners: Oh for the garments of praise! They raise an evil report; and ordinarily carnality and discouragement go together.

CHAP. V.

Of my recovery.

SECT. I.

Of the first several steps, and manner thereof.

THE Lord did not raise me all at once out of my backslidden condition, nor without interruption (as might be thought) but very leisurely, and thro' many ups and downs. The seed was sown, and it grew; and I ate and drank, and knew not how: the spring was small in the beginning, scarce discernible. I looked indeed for the kingdom of heaven to come with observation, but it came not so; and as it was sown with little sin and noise, so did it grow up quietly, and had many interruptions and winters, going backward and forward; like the filling sea, some wave gained ground, and some succeeding lost and abated, but a new overflowing regained all again. There would come a wave of the spirit that would overflow largely, but after that a little ebb; and then,

when I little expected, there would come a wave that would set me as far forward as ever again; and then a little decay, and then a recovery, so as for a long time I was toft up and down like a locuft wearied of myself, and of my life, and righteousness, and enlargements of heart, and of all these glories. I was after humiliation of heart, by a strong yet quiet hand, at the command of God, with little din made to believe and rest on Christ, so as I had never done the same before; and in process of time to become assured, and so come to see myself in a good estate, and to have come off my way, and the Lord to have almost perfected his work e'er I had thought he had well begun. Nor all this time did I know what the Lord was doing until of late; but thinking I was minting to enter in at the strait gate, and *ever learning and never able to attain to the knowledge of the truth.* and now I see that all this time the Lord carried me as an eagle doth her young ones, Deut. xxxii. 10, 11 12. And when the Lord was leaving, and his work going back in mine eyes, yet was it going forward. The way and steps of this my recovery were.

STEP I.

After I had long departed from God, and so gone far away, the Lord made me unsatisfied with and weary of my present condition; and even in this laughing madness was my heart made sorrowful: and when in midst of my jollity, if at any time I would think on my former estate, I would say, Oh what a sad condition am I in now! Oh the days of old! *Oh that it were with me as in months past!* Oh that I were under Christ's terrors again! his glooms and boasts were better *than this at best,* Hos. ii. 7. Better when ~~with~~ ^{the}

the first husband. I remembered whence I had fallen; and this dung out the bottom of my carnal contentments.

STEP II.

I had thoughts to return to my first husband, but was beaten from this with the apprehensions that it was not time; and hence it became a great case to me, whether the Lord may assault a soul with a spirit of conviction, and leave it, and come again? Rutherford had a terrible word, which haunted me like a Ghost, *viz. A man is saved in the nick of conversion, or else eternally lost.* Sometimes I thought I was judicially hardened, and my time gone; but the Lord did take the thorn away, and made me hope, by casting a book in my hand which did write of compunction; and he states the case, *viz. Whether a man once under convictions, and these dying without fruit, can be again converted?* He determined it affirmatively, with such reasons as then convinced me, so as I resolved to set up shop again, and try it, Ezra x. 2, 3. but I found therein a great difficulty.

STEP III.

Was the setting about the means, with prayer, reading and meditation. I rested not in bare fruitless wishings and hopes, but I was helped to set myself to seek the Lord, and set up shop again; but with some difficulty, the irons were rusted, I continued praying morning and evening for some time and meditating, and preparing my heart, notwithstanding all my discouragements and indispositions and little success; for my heart continued hard, dead and blind, and conversation carnal, and duties were a burden to me.

STEP

STEP IV.

Having for some twenty days prayed, mourned and complained, and not finding any life, but my deadness increasing, and hearing no word of Christ, I begun to have suspicions that sentence was indeed past against me, and that I was sealed under the plague of an hard heart, and that Christ had given over; and was tempted to cast aside duties as vain: and then I said, Oh poor soul, thou wilt never get so much as a tender heart again, nor so much as once to pour out this thy soul to God e'er thou die. While I was thus exercised, the Lord was pleased to let me again taste some of the sweetness of duties; for one time I went in the multitude of my thoughts to the Lord in prayer; and it pleased the spirit to blow, and to open my heart, so as I prayed with abundance of tears and great liberty, and I found much sweetness in the work: now, altho' I was not satisfied with this, yet I was comforted, in that it was a proof to me that the Lord had not quite forsaken me, and that after this there would come better.

STEP V.

I begun then to fall more closely to work, and to put other sails on, and more irons in the fire; for then did I write diaries, make vows and covenants, and to fall to the work of self-examination, and to write some infant notions of practical divinity, and my meditations on several texts, which did me good, and at first helped me forward, and suited me well.

STEP VI.

The Lord by duties wearied me with them, and mortified me to my self righteousness, and *did with labour bring down my heart.* He discovered

covered unto me, and let me feel the evil and power of my heart : Then did I groan under the burden of a dead, blind and carnal heart, and the body of death was my great exercise, and heart-ills, especially hardness of heart : and thus more sensibly than ever I was wearied and burdened with my heart, tho' not in horror. 2dly, The Lord let me see the sinfulness of all my duties and best actions; the formality, lifelessness, and corrupt principles whence they proceeded, and my great short-comings; so as I knew these were not my saviours, and turned mine eyes from them. 3dly, I was wearied and loadned with myself, my sins and duties, trailed thro' various dispensations, and burdened with feckless labour : I saw I could not put my heart in a frame, nor keep my heart in a frame when it was in it, but still did break my resolutions. My duties they yielded neither peace nor satisfaction, nor did they mortify sin ; for I was but rowing against the stream, and after a long time worse in my own conceit than before : I was dying sometimes, and living again ; when like to die, the Lord would look upon me, and put it in my heart to seek him, and would send down influences, and enlarge my soul with love and desires after himself, and sorrow for sin, and new resolutions ; and this would quicken me for a while, and make me hope and seek the Lord. And then again the Lord would depart, and my soul would be overclouded, and I would turn unwatchful, and fall to my ordinary sins, and depart from the Lord, and sin in words : and with this I was vexed, because my resolutions were broken ; and I was discouraged, and despaired ever to come up ; and was weakned, thinking, how shall I look the Lord in the face ? What security can I now give.

give him for my behaviour ? until at last that no frame or duty could give me comfort at all. And, when my heart was enlarged, I said, I have enough of delusions, let me alone. Yet, whilst thus discouraged, not knowing what to do, and unable to think of what might do me good, God would shine in upon my soul ; and among a hundred visits of this kind he gave me, and by which he many times restored my dying-out heart to life, he was pleased still to come out and create a new thing, some new ground, and the floods would still increase. How often have I said, now, sure the Lord will come, and will not tarry ; now I shall keep fast what I have. But I was deceived ; *All flesh is grass and the glory thereof withereth.* I have said sometimes in my extremity, now, what is it that can quicken me ? surely I can never recover out of this, tho' God should open windows in heaven. Then would the Lord shew his power and condescendency, and would quicken me, and put away my fears, and make me look cheerful, and cause me put on new resolutions. In a word I was thus wearied and burdened in a wilderness for the space of three full years, and poured from vessel to vessel.

STEP VII.

When all fail'd, and that I was at the point of dying, the Lord would send some extraordinary thing, some fit word, some good book, that would quicken me and strengthen me sometimes, to spend half nights in prayer. Sometimes, meeting with other christians, the Lord would rain some seasonable word ; and nothing did me more good than stories relating to God's dealing with others. Likewise, being in the south, the Lord tryed me with a powerful new-testament ministry, which did :

keep in my dying life, and greatly encouraged ; many a time was my swooning life revived, I brought from the gates of death. Yet these piercings unsensibly sanctified me more and more in heart and conversation, and made heavenly things relish with my soul ; and by them I was made more capable to receive the Lord, and my soul therewith kept waking. And this I look upon as my wilderness-condition.

STEP VIII.

The Lord having fully wearied me with my sins, art, duties, and enlargements, and spoured me from vessel to vessel ; and looking for help in vain from another, he did next humble me : for ever all this there remained a pride of heart, which kythed not in the estimation I had of my righteousness, but in the forwardness of my will, which would not submit to such searchings, it secretly fretted and murmured, like these, *ov. xix. 3.* I thought God made it all his work to cross me, and hence was disquieted with his, and not kindly humbled ; and withal, some murmuring at the Lord's delays. For one day riding on the Sabbath-afternoon on *Shepherd's and believer*, after I had come very unprofitably to my sermon, and withal discouraged, being August 1660 ; the place I read on was of the nature of humiliation, and how the Lord works it in his elect (by convincing the soul of the equity of God's proceeding with it, and thereby the soul is made quietly and willingly to bear what the Lord pleaseth to determine against it, without repining or murmuring) in reading of which, and of the motives and reasons of submission, the Lord opened my eyes, and bowed my heart, so as I saw his equity in his dealing towards me, and complied in

in my will and affections to his dealings, submitting myself to him without quarreling or murmuring, in another way and manner than ever I did before. 1st, I saw clearly and rationally the Lord's equity, and absolute dominion he hath over all, to do with them as he pleaseth; and that he did nothing with me but what was fitting, Lam. i. 18. Dan. ix. 7. Jer. xii. 1. The murmurings and swellings of my heart were quieted and calmed; I was no more like the raging sea, but in a calm and quiet frame, like one newly cool'd out of a raging fever, Lam. iii. 28. Lev. x. 3. Psal. xxxix. 9. I disputed now no more against God or his proceedings. 2dly, My heart, even my affections, were made to comply with my present dispensations; I did willingly bear the yoke, Mic. vii. 9. Lam. iii. 28. So that I was satisfied with whatever came to pass; *It is the Lord, &c.* 3dly, I did put myself in his will; to do to me as it seemed good; so as, if he put me in hell, I should not murmur nor complain of injustice, 2 Sam. xv. 26. This was wrought in a low measure, and did proceed more from the sense of God's sovereignty than of his justice, and was rather negative in not murmuring, than positive in a hearty compliance with evils. And thus was the frame and work of humiliation wrought in me; and I continued herein for a month, suffering every thing, and doing what the Lord required.

STEP IX.

After I was in this low measure, humbled, I proceeded another step, even to resign myself to the Lord, it was occasioned by reading a sermon of *Mr. Andrew Gray's*, on these words, *My son give me thy heart*. I was made to comply with that command,

command, so as, tho' I could not say I was quite conquered by the love of Christ so fully to give up myself, yet thro' sense of want and misery, and some old love to Christ, and withal hoping it might be a mean to do me good, and willing to comply with a command, I did legally and affectionately dispoſe my heart to Christ: "O Lord, said I, tho' I cannot command this evil heart to love thee, nor myself to serve thee; yet, if I have power or right of it, I hear legally renounce that right in thy favours, and by these presents make over myself to thee, and all that is within me: now, Lord, take me at my word, and take advantage of this to claim me as thine own; accept the real motions of my will: O that Christ would now look on me as his, and pretend right to me, and make use of this right!" In the strength of this I walked for some time, tho' it did not always satisfy: for I could not believe that tho' I was sincere and affectionate in this, that ever my disposition could give Christ a right to me, unless he likewise did accept it. "Lord, thou offerest thyself to me (said I) and I cannot take thee; Lord, I likewise offer myself to thee, thou mayst take me, but wilt not: Oh! others take advantage of my bargains; Oh that Christ would do so, and challenge a claim and right to me! Lord, thou sayst thou art willing to do me good; Lord, I offer myself to thee to do with me what thou wilt; only let me not be guided by myself." Here came I, and I did stick and wrestle for some time striving to come forth. This was in July, and I continued till the latter end of August thus.

SECT. II.

*Relating some things touching my humiliation and
wilderness-condition.*

1. **T**HE frame and exercise of my heart while in this condition was, 1st, I found great deadness and hardness of heart ; and this I mourned under, as my greatest evil. I now thought I could never win to be so sensible of my condition as I ought to be, and in my heart I desired a law-work again. 2dly, I was in great blindness and distance with Christ, and therefore much lamented my ignorance of him ; and therefore was unsatisfied with my greatest attainments, in respect I saw not himself ; or, if I did, it was very darkly. 3dly, I wanted assurance, and was in the dark as to my interest, and rather was inclined to think myself not converted than converted, and was seeking and hoping for something ; and any thing I met with made me rejoice, as it was an evidence of some good to come to me, rather than as it was a token of any good already gotten : I had no foundations settled. 4thly, I was unconstant ; my *goodness* was as *the morning-dew*, so as my great complaints were, that my heart would not retain or keep the divine impressions that were on it now and then, Hof. vi. 4. 5thly, I was full of unbelief, constructing hardly of God and of his ways, and of myself ; which unbelief, tho' as yet I saw it not as a sin, yet did me much evil : I thought ill that I was delivered from my terrors, Exod. xvii. 3. 6thly, I was tormented with this, That I met not with that sweetness and fellowship in ordinances as I desired, but barran for the most part to my soul ; not being thankful for the day
of

Things, such as quickening, healing, en-
 cement and comfort ; and not humbled for
 when nothing was spoken to me. 7thly,
 was security and unwatchfulness, whereby
 I was ready to grow careless, by which I
 fell to some sins of conversation, which
 took my peace.

ordinarily then slipt in these sins, which
 took my peace : 1st, Departing from God,
 by turning secure and careless, and suf-
 fering my heart to go out of all tune, thro' not
 being as in the sight of God. 2dly, Sensuality
 or immoderate use of comforts, being natu-
 rally given to appetite. 3dly, Idle vain words, and
 conversation. 4thly, Unprofitable spending
 of time, and not improving opportunities and oc-
 casions of good, letting my generation work by by.
 Carnality in all my actions civil and religi-
 ous, not doing things spiritually. 6thly, Sloth in
 about the means ; beside the inward evils
 as, murmuring and unbelief, and want of
 godly fear.

But as the Lord shewed kindness to his peo-
 ple in the wilderness, notwithstanding all their
 rebellions, so did he to me ; and I observed
 this during this time in several particulars :
 When I was in hazard to sleep the sleep of
 death and to depart from the Lord thro' my dis-
 comforts and plagues of heart, evil and car-
 pentry ; what mercy was it, to clear me
 from my discouragements, to take me to the wil-
 derness from the crowd of the world, and against
 all manner of indispositions, sloth and discouragement
 to persuade and make me return and
 seek the Lord in the use of all means, *if so be there*
be hope, when I had no mind of it, nor
 thought of it ? how did he convince me that my

time was not yet gone ; that when I was dep-
 and like to fall, nay, far gone in a confu-
 of which I would have died, that I should b-
 vented and healed, and that he should rene-
 kindness, and would not let me depart for-
 but stirred me up to seek the Lord? *He fou-*
in an howling wilderness, ready to perish, g-
 out my last, Deut. xxxiii. 10. 'There had
 rished for ever ; but the Lord made a secon-
 age for me, he *came to seek and to save that*
was lost. 2dly, What love and mercy was it
 that when thro' sense of deadness, spiritu-
 deriness-wants, fierce temptations, and great
 ness, I was ready to go back unto Egypt,
 faint in the way, that he should have giv-
 water out of the rock, and should by visit-
 have upholden my spirit, and by these encou-
 me, and kept me in my dying life, traini-
 on piece and piece? 3dly, But oh what I
 think of his continued mercy, his being eve-
 me ? tho' I was wild, weak, and unworthy
 sinful, and ever destroying myself ; yet
 steps were guided by him, he was ever wil-
 pitying me, ever sparing me, ever relieving
 extremity, and preventing my utter ruin ; I
 all this time he was with me in love, long-
 ing, pity and goodness, when I could do
 for myself at all. How long did I stay *in the*
of the breaking forth of children, and was I
 profitable to him at all, doing no good
 world, and thro' unbelief constructing all the
 worst ? yet was he still with me, and never
 me until he had brought me unto a *Rock high*
I. Oh what unwearied pains and cost was
 Oh shall I ever forget his condescender
 thought ill that mine evils came thro' my
 default : for tho' I should turn dead and Gr-

left me, if I had then been on my watch-tower I would not care; but the Lord would have my restoration of free grace from himself. Readily then I would say, it was my waiting, watching and diligence that did recover me; oh not! but when sinful, when asleep, when given over, he would come, that it might appear, *not for your sakes do I this, but for my name's sake.* There was not only wisdom, power and pity, but likewise a coming over my sins, and great mercy; and now I think it no worse, and no less comfortable, that my mercies had his name engraven on them, even his grace, tho' there be not such ground for boasting: I was indeed the bush burning, and not consumed. Lord, *what is man, that thou lookest on him, and visits him every morning?* Job vii. 17, 18.

4. I remember, when I came to Edinburgh first, and not having room to pray, and likewise overcome with discouragements, not seeing an end of my labours, I began to faint and weary; and the Lord let me alone for a while, and I grew worse and worse: until one sabbath-day I went to hear an able minister, and much cried up; but there was such a throng, that I could not get him heard, nor to any other church in the town; only I stumbled at last into the English church which was then in the town, with no great hope to get any good. The minister preached on these words, *a bruised reed will be not break.* What shall I say? the Lord assisted him with such power, and he spoke so seasonably to me, that I was again revived and set in the way, and resolved to hold on till I should find the Lord; yea, it was then that I had some thoughts that I was converted, and some of my ordinary objections were answered.

5. I began again to faint and depart, because I *thought never one* was in my condition: and,
G 3
being

being in a conference with a godly man, he told me the history of his conversion, and what brave days he had seen, and how that nothing now was but deadness, carnality and unbelief. This had such influence, that again my heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and that I was not singular, but my case was common, and therefore resolved to seek the Lord. And at the same time I got in my hands a piece of Mr. Shepherd's I had never seen before, which the Lord blessing, after some consideration I resolved once more to assault the city, and to beseech God more earnestly than ever I had done before, which I was helped in some measure to do, and found the profit of it.

6. A while after, fainting and giving over, I read on *Mr. Shepherd's sound believer* concerning soul-humiliation, where he speaks to this purpose: "One way by which the Lord Jesus (saith he) in the day of his power doth humble a poor sinner, is, by letting him see the wilderness of his own heart and duties; whereby the soul thinks, can these that are so wild save me? and then (saith he) the soul thinks, tho' for the present I be not well, yet hopes it shall do better in process of time, and thereupon falls to afresh; but Christ loads and wearies the soul with duties; and, after all its labour, the soul findeth itself worse than before: and here again the soul falleth down, finding itself to row against both wind and tide." Well (quoth I) this is like me, and this is it which God is doing with me: but, alas, my heart is hard, and I never felt conviction and compunction yet; how can I be come to humiliation then? well, I read further, until he brings the humbled soul to speak thus; "Oh miserable wretch that I am, never worse than now: once I could mourn, and pray, and sor-
row,

"row, and never well but when out of one duty
 "into another, but now a dead, blind, hard
 "heart seizeth upon me, so as I can get nothing
 "done." Here I stopt, and said, then blessed be
 the Lord, that hath not let me alone, but given
 me so much light as to discern my way, and where
 I am. And is God indeed humbling me, and
 preparing me for Christ? I see that God hath
 left me to my deadness, that the sense thereof
 might draw me to Christ; for, as the same au-
 thor saith, "more are drawn to Christ under the
 "sense of a dead blind heart, than by all for-
 "rows, humiliations and terrors." I trust God,
 that hath begun the work, will finish it. I was
 wonderfully strengthened by this; 'tis good to be
 in God's hands, howsoever matters be. With
 these and the like was my spirit kept up in this
 wilderness.

7. I have been searching into the Lord's ends
 in this to me, and am never more satisfied than
 when I conclude them to be, 1st, That I might
 know all the evil in my heart, my weakness
 and sinfulness, that thereby I might be humbled,
 who have so often departed, and whose whole
 life was a grieving of God, Deut. viii. 2. 2 Chron.
 xxxii. 31. John ii. 25. 2dly That I might
 hereby be made acquaint with the methods and
 way of conversion, with which, thro' my hasty
 coming, I was not so well acquaint. God did
 now as it were act over again conversion; he con-
 vinced me, not only of actual sins, but of heart-
 sins and heart-plagues, and of that fountain-sin of
 nature which continually departed from God,
 and fiercely resisted him in all his ways; he con-
 vinced me that I could not help myself, and that
 neither prayers nor means could help me; that I
 could neither buy nor conquer heaven; he wearied

ed me with duties and enlargements, and in the greatness of my way, and loaded me with the multitude of my counsels and inventions; at last he humbled me and calmed me, and made me believe: So that I think the Lord designed to acquaint me with the method of conversion, that I might be the more enabled to edify others, Acts v. 32 being myself a witness, and not heard it only, but also felt and seen, that I might speak to this purpose, 1 John i. 1. Psal. xxxiv. 4, 6, 11. *Not ignorant of his devices*, 2 Cor. ii. 11. 3dly, That God might do me much good in the end; of which I had promise given me, and rationally and seasonably born in upon my spirit, from Deut. viii. 16. in one of my dolorous hours, Heb. xii. 11. Jer. xxv. 4. I indeed expect much good from all this preparation and hard beginning. 4thly, I look upon this as the only way to preserve me from backsliding. By these means, and by emptying me from vessel to vessel, came it to pass that mine eyes were kept waking, and from settling on my lees; for I might perceive by scripture and sad experience, that many were full of their own enlargements and graces, and so fix'd as they thought they had no more ado, and therefore, like that rich man, Luke xii. said, *soul, take thy rest, thou hast enough for many days*. The foolish virgins thought their great business was done; by which means, being as they supposed past all danger, they slumbered and slept, and thro' sloth lost all; and, being settled on their Lees, lost all, and backslided and apostatised miserably, and lost all life: but the Lord kept mine eyes waking, and gave me still my hands full ado; and, when I would seek rest, the Lord by a new storm would awaken me again; when discouraged through fears, temptations, desertions and sins, and so like

like to give over because no hope, then would the Lord revive ; and when I would say, *'tis good to be here, let us make tabernacles*, then a cloud would come ; so as by lifting up and casting down, I was daily kept in exercise, depending, praying and fighting, Judg. iii. 1. Psal. lxxiii. 3, 4, 5, 14. Jer. xlviii. 11. Psal. lv. 19. Job vii. 18. 5thly, To manifest to me, and to give me experience of his love, condescendency and constancy, who in all my ways was with me, and that has never left me until he had his work wrought in me, that preserved me in this great wilderness, that did bear with my manners there, that supplied me continually in my extremities, Deut. viii. 5. 6thly, To beat me out of my self-righteousness, worthiness and sense, that thereby I might be fastened on the *rock higher than I*, that finding no rest for the sole of my foot by duties and enlargements, but they decaying under me, I might seek rest where it might be found, Mat. xi. 28. that, these sandy foundations being razed, I might build on that which will endure for ever, and thereby stand out all storms ; for these good moods I was in could not comfort me or uphold me when my conscience was distress'd. nor yet could they maintain themselves, but still decayed : and therefore, this not being my rest, I was to seek it another way. Jer. l. 6. and that I might know man's life is not upholden by means as by the Lord in or without them ; *Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. For this is natural to us, to depend upon what our eyes see, and not to look to him who is invisible, who indeed is *All in all*. Now, the insufficiency of duties and self-righteousness did appear by these things ; 1st, I never had full peace by them in their best, nor could they answer all accusations ;

accusations; some bone was still sticking. 2dly, They could not give full satisfaction nor contentment; something was wanting; they were bread which satisfied not. 3dly, The roots of sin did not appear to be taken away, and there was but little advantage got against corruption, it appeared still in its strength; and but very indiscernible growth in grace. 4thly, It could not hold out in temptations; but, whenever there came a storm, I was dung on my back, giving all hopes over. 5thly, When deadness came, there was no substance in what I met with to quicken me, as I now find in the promises and flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. 6thly, They could not last, but perish'd when I was revived and therefore finding this, and that I but spent my strength in vain for bread *that profiteth not*, I was made dead to them, and had no comfort in them or from them, but in so far as they were appearances of Christ's coming, and did prognosticate that he was not far away; and therefore look'd up for that bread which endureth for ever. Surely this is not my rest; I wanted security, satisfaction and strength in all these things. The 6th end was, to break my pride and stubbornness; which did not lyth so much in good thoughts of myself (for I saw I was empty) but in this, in liking to save myself by my own strength, and means and way: for, when I was beat out of all this, I thought that if I would wait, and not depart wickedly from God, I should herein have peace; and upon this projected to myself certain rules by which to walk. This I put no question to do and keep, and was confident enough, and would have no other way but this, because this was my own chusing, and that with a secret end of exalting myself, and getting a name before God of a righteous person: but
 God.

God seeing me *set my heart as the heart of God;* Ezek. xxviii. 2. and abhorring the pride thereof, did resist me continually; and what by desertions, what by temptations, did so order it, as I was unable to keep my resolutions, his counsel standing, and my resolutions falling; and, *in the thing wherein I dealt proudly, he was above me.* I fell many times, nay, almost every time, thro' unwatchfulness; and this made me murmur and grieve more that my purposes were broken, and the building I had framed like the spider's web hurl'd down, then that God was dishonoured, Prov. xix. 3. My foolishness perverted my way, and my heart retted against the Lord, and likewise fretted that, he case being so, he should punish: I gave no glory to God, who had *power over these plagues,* Lev. xvi. 9. And notwithstanding I fell, yet, like Tyrus, I would say, *I was God,* to him before whom I fell, Ezek. xxviii. 2. and would ever be trying to establish my own righteousness, not acknowledging my own insufficiency, nor acknowledging that it is God that doth what he wills, and that none saith and it cometh to pass but God: and God by his providences did prove his, and made me like an ox eat grass; yet would not I be convinced that the most high ruleth, and is yet a part of my exercise to get quit of this spirit, Ezek. xxviii. 6, 9. Dan. iv. 25, 27. Exod. viii. 11. And therefore it came to pass that the Lord did constantly crush me in my will and resolutions: and, when he was pleased to shew mercy, it was neither in the time, way or manner when I either resolved to have it, or expected or desired; and all this to let me know that the most high directeth the ways of man, and that grace is man's best charter, and to bow and break this will to submit to God in all dispensations, and to
be

be carried to my journey's end what way soever he pleased, tho' through mire and dirt, Ezek. xi. 32 *That which cometh in your thoughts shall not at all be.*

8 From which I observe this; 1st, That folk may contract by backsliding what they will not in a long time recover again, and the dregs of it may remain after they are indeed begun to return to the Lord; it is not easy to twin with sin, Josh. xxii. 17. The iniquity of Baalpeor, tho' long since contracted, and much cost wared on it, yet not purged away until this day. The security and indispositions I then contracted, I am not free from yet. 2dly, A man's whole life is but a conversion; and the Lord after every kind of backsliding draws after the same way as at the first conversion, yea, and deals so with them as they may seem never to have been converted before, Mat. xviii. 3. Yea, I found a more distinct preparatory work after my first drawing than ever before: For the Lord did things in a clap at first, and in a very little time did let me see that I was undone, that I was not converted nor could convert myself; and the insufficiency of duties and an unconverted condition, with God's wrath, had some impressions on my spirit: and then the Lord revealed Christ unto me, on whom I believed, and with whom I closed. But now the Lord did draw me very clearly, and did insist in every step so, as that all the knowledge I have of the work of preparations, I have it from what I met with after I knew Christ, more than from what I met with at first. 3dly, The strongest, last and bitterest enemy the Lord hath, and which he abhorreth most, is spiritual pride; against this he setteth himself mainly, I mean, the vain glorious confidence folk have in their own strength, and

to be saved by their own righteousness, and to have their own wills fulfilled. It is hard to get our high conceits down, and it is hard to get the will broken to be submissive to the Lord's will in all dispensations; and it is hard to get folk to glorify God and make use of his righteousness, Ezek. xlviii. 9 Prov. xix. 3. It is easy to let a man see he is not converted, that he cannot save himself; but it is hard perswading him that he can do nothing, not so much as to be thankful for the least mercy: ye will not perswade him to live and live only in, to, and by another, and submit himself, his will in all things to God, and with a holy contentedness to submit to have his resolutions broken, and God glorified; and contented and satisfied in this, that the counsel of the Lord hath taken effect. 4thly, It is the frequency and constancy of God's waterings that doth good, rather than any measure of a particular fit or visitation; and from this more love may be gathered, John v. 7. *If my words abide in you. He that endureth to beend shall be saved.* Balaam had a strange fit. These waterings, through their frequency and constancy, in process of time did good, did sanctify, did humble, did make me delight in duty, and draw to God and from the world. *Gutta cavat lapidem non sed sepe cadendo.* Hos. iii. 3. *Thou shalt abide for many days.* And that which cometh by degrees hath most last. 5thly, Unwatchfulness is a constant and only evil, prejudicial to a progress in grace, Mat. xxvi. 41 6thly, *Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* I owe any thing that was wrought in me to his grace and goodness, and not to my own resolutions, nor to any means whatsoever. *O people saved by the Lord.* I did by many experiences find a horse a vain help. 7thly, Folk in re-

turning to God are drawn by degrees, by little and little, and not all at once: as first to put in their heart to seek God, then a remissness, then a turning more serious, then to find more sweetness in the Lord and his ways: *by little and little will I drive them out.* And therefore folk may be converted, tho' they remember not of any special day, that might be as a time to pass reckoning upon; do as ye may, and be drawn according to God's will, *who leads the blind in a way that they know not.* 8thly, The way to heaven is a tedious, wearisome, narrow and strait gate, even a terrible and great wilderness, Deut. viii. 15. that heaven may be the sweeter when it comes. Oh how much need of patience is there! and what thankfulness owe we, when we come to any place where there are fountains of water! let us not think strange if thus we find it. 9thly, There is not possibly in some so much sensible joy as at their first conversion, of which many reasons may be given; no such singing as when brought out of Egypt; the fatted calf is slain at first, Luke, xv. 23. The gold and prize is seen at the break of the race, and at the race's end; folk have most need of it then. They were not sent to the war the first year. 10thly, All must be in some measure humbled e'er they get any good; meekness and made silent before, and submissive to God, Lev. xxvi. 41. 11thly, All exercises as to circumstances are not alike in christians; one christian's pace is not a method or a rule for another. 12thly, There may be wearying and loading, and real humiliation, tho' there be no terrors on the soul. 13thly, Sense of a dead hard heart are an effectual means to draw to Christ, yea, and more effectual than any other can be, because, *dead, miserable and naked*, Rev. iii. 18. 14thly, God is
ever

er carrying on his work in a soul, or in a kingdom, tho' we do not always perceive it: for he carries it on insensibly; the seed grows, and thou knowest not how; he hath his way in the storms: *girded thee with strength, tho' thou knewest not.* 14thly, when we think he is standing still, or going backward, yet he is going forwards. 15thly, hope is the first step of recovery, and all the followers of the elect have hope in them; therefore every one labour to settle this well, *Ezra. x. 2. There is hope, therefore let us turn.* 16thly, The beginnings of grace are very small, poor and unpromising, like a grain of mustard-seed, *Mat. xiii. 31, 32. Ezek. xlvii. 3, 4, 5.*

SECT. III.

now I was drawn to God, and made to close with him by faith.

FOR any thing I could learn of myself, or discern, I had the seeds of grace and faith before this time; but yet I lived more by sense than by other way, and therefore I fell and rose as life was up or down, and so never came to any settlement, like a wave tossed up and down: and the Lord, intending to settle me, did beat me down sense, and made me learn a more excellent way, even to live by faith. I knew there was a God, whereof I knew little; only I thought it was an estate of constant joy and life, wherein the spirit would evermore triumph against the flesh, and wherein all actions would be pure and cleanly: and thus, like the Jews and Disciples, I dreamed of a heaven on earth, tho' not of an earthly king-

dom. But that which was indeed my rest, to which he that believeth hath entred in, I never so much as dreamd of it: for I thought faith was some extraordinary rapture, and seeing of Christ with great fulgor and glory; this I thought to be faith, or the ground of it. But the Lord came in the *calm voice*, and Christ grew *like a tender plant out of a dry ground*, Luke xvii. 20. Zech. iv. 6. And indeed the foundation of this second temple was far less glorious in appearance than the first: oh how was I mistaken! it was less in my thoughts; that such a dead, blind, carnal sinful soul should be called to believe and depend most confidently on Christ, and that without any sign from heaven, but upon the bare warrant of his word in scripture: the way and manner whereof, as I remember, I shall set down; which was the tenth and last step of my recovery.

1. Finding therefore no rest in my exercise of self-resignation, for the causes above and formerly exprest, I began to be very sorrowful and disconsolate, and, like Pharaoh's chariots, to drive on heavily. I continued waiting in the means; and one day, as I was reading in my ordinary, I read these words in Hag. ii. 17. *I smote you in all the labour of your hands, yet ye turned not to me, saith the Lord.* I applied this spiritually; that is, thought I, God hath smitten me in all my labours, duties, resolutions and vows, and for all this I turned not to God; but wherein am I not turned? wherein shall I return? how so? have I not left my sins, mourned, prayed, read and meditated? what remains yet to be done? what duty or mean do I slight? what pains in my power have I withholden? I therefore cast mine eyes upon all duties; and, while I was thus searching, some blessed motion was suggested to me, that I had all my

me slighted the duty of believing; and turned to God by faith; and therefore, thou do, God will ever continue in thee in all the labours of thy hand, for *with 'tis impossible to please God*: and it hath e want of this, and this only, that hath ee in all thine endeavours. Faith, quoth ed, what is this! what, me believe, that ld, so unprepared, so dead, so little pri-Christ! it cannot be; Lord, now keep elusion. Yes, faith, of which so much in scripture, of which thou knowest so at is the main grace, said the spirit. ings made me some way apprehensive of er.

herefore, in the second place, was made der the matter, and I found that faith at place in religion; and withal, looking ; I found that I had very little practised it, as great a stranger to it as these disciples, . 1; 2. were to the knowledge of the Ho- : I knew not what it was, nor had for-ercised it; or distinctly or expressly heard y, knew not that it was my duty; for rinciple remained with me, viz. I believ-one should believe but persons so and so , and that the ground thereof was some nanifestation of glory, which until I could hought I was to ly in my prison and John xvi. 9.

Lord did convince me fully that I should and that it was the duty of every one : said before, I thought that only persons o qualified were bound to believe; but siful Lord himself did unloose this knot, g me to him, convincing me that it was o to do; and thereby the chains where-

with Satan had for a long time bound & kept me from the distinct exercise and life were broken: and that which is wonderful heard it an hundred times press'd in fern believe, and yet until that day was never ded it was my duty to believe, nor never that exercise at all. The grounds wherel then perswaded to believe, or that believ my duty, yea, and that all were bound to which was the first point, were these; 1st scripture, 1 John iii. 23. *This is his command, that ye believe on the name of the Son* 'Then 'tis commanded, concluded I; and it not duty? nay, is it not the great comfort thou question that prayer is thy duty 'tis thy duty, because commanded: then receiving of Christ, being commanded like is thy duty as well as prayer. 2^{dly}, Wic regenerate men are commanded to believe 'tis the great duty, more acceptable and weing to God than any thou canst perform vi. 28. *What is the work of God that we shoud it?* the answer verse 29th, was very contrary to their expectations and thoughts, *This is of God, that ye believe on him whom he has* this is the first, the great command, and mand tying graceless persons such as w Jews. 3^{dly}, That scripture was brought to mind, Rom. iv. 20. *Abraham by believing God, compared with Num xx. 12. Because he had not, to sanctify my name before this people, therefore ye shall not bring this people into the land* Now, seeing believing glorifies God, thou art bound unto it; for every man is bound to God: who questions this? now, believing glorifies God, in acknowledging his power, grace and rich grace. 4^{thly}, The spirit urged

gument, the wicked are punished for not believing, 'tis their duty to believe. See Psal. lxxviii: 32, 33. *He consumed their days in vanity*, because they believed not on him; and so shall he do with thee if thou do not believe. 5thly, This was confirmed to me by the first scripture, and by the language of some providences: what else could I call my continual disappointments, and fruitless labours, but a call to me to try what this might do? my days were consumed, and therefore by my stroke I might read my sin.

4. The Lord having by these perswaded and convinced me that it was my duty to believe, and rolled this stone away from the sepulchre; he proceeded next to answer my manifold objections, which then did begin to swarm and keep me from believing. The main were, 1st, I cannot believe; and therefore; why am I called to believe? 'tis the gift of God, and why should I hammer out a faith of my own bowels? this will not be accepted. It was answered, the Lord, by thus drawing and inviting thee, gives thee power to come, as it was when he called on dead Lazarus to live and come forth. And besides, thou canst not sanctify a sabbath, nor pray; yet 'tis thy duty, and thou goest about it as thou canst: so do here. Yea, to the wearied and loadned, and called thus, 'tis not impossible. A 2d objection was, I fear I may presume. It was answered, to believe, in obedience to a command, is no presumption: when thou receivest Christ, and in this act believes on and rests in him for pardon, this being obedience cannot be presumption, for 'tis no presumption to obey God; to believe uncalled, is presumption or unwarrantable. Objection 3d. I am not enough humbled, my heart is dead and hard, and I am altogether insensible of my condition;
and

and therefore, how can I be called to believe 'tis the *wearied* and *heavy-loadned* that are to come. It was answered, it may be so, gives no right to come ; 'tis the call and command of God, and gospel-offers, which give and not any qualifications : and besides, Mr. Gray at the same time, that these wearied and loadned are rather these to come, than those that ought to come. 'tis miserable and naked and wild ; all is to be done : how can it be otherwise, when thou hast such a distance with Christ who is the author of life ? if thou wouldst believe, he would give thee what thou wants ; there is no other way of receiving life but by coming to him, Job objection 4th, But I cannot prize Christ, I am not prepared. It was answered, that as faith fetches all from him, so fetching it prizes of him ; for if faith fetches all from Christ, then nothing to Christ but deadness, blindness, sinfulness : come to him for grace to prize if thou once wouldst believe, then Christ be precious to thee, 1 Pet. ii. 7. emptiness the best qualification ; *The hungry he filleth with things, but the rich he sendeth away empty.* is no more required than what makes thee willing to accept him ; if therefore thou art willing to accept Christ, thou prizest him sufficiently and art sufficiently prepared. Object 2d, Thou findest no glorious power drawing thee ; it was answered, yet I find the Lord in my heart really calling me, and this is as sufficient ; to thee as tho' he came personally and visited and desired this of thee ; and therefore do what thou wouldst do then : his word is *sure word of prophecy*, surer than the word that came down from heaven. Objection 6th

find, no good after I believe. It was answered, no more do saints at first, Hof vi. 2. *After two days will he come and revive us.* 'Tis not by coming to him, but by *abiding in him*, that fruit is brought forth. I confess, by the answering of these objections, and by other arguments, the Lord did sensibly and seasonably, and with a strong hand, convince me that it was my duty to believe. Oh will he take such a vile worm as I ! yes he will ; for thou art the fittest person in the world for him to glorify his grace on. The Lord did incessantly follow me with these thoughts, yea, I found a sensible power dealing with me.

5. The Lord did not only draw me to conclude that believing was my duty, and answered my objections ; but by other arguments perswaded me to go about this duty of believing on, and closing with Christ. The main motives were, 1st, Dost thou not see how earnest God is with thee ? he commands, invites, threatens thee ; hath at last opened thy blind eyes to let thee see thy duty, loosed all thy objections, and hath now this long time waited on thee : oh ! open at last, and yield to his importunity, Rev. iii. 20 2dly, Know it, if thou wilt not answer, and quickly answer, God will away and leave thee, and there will be no more knocking, but all this work shall die, and thou shalt never be converted, Prov. i. 24, &c. 3dly, There is nothing more pleasing to God than believing : behold how the Angels are expecting and wishing in their hearts that now there may be a match made, Luke xv. 7. and ii. 13. This will please the Lord for all the ills that thou hast done him, nothing thou canst do can be so pleasing to him ; for this is the end of all dispensations, and the great command : now, make amends for all ye have done, John vi. 28. 4thly, Consider
th.

the duty itself; 'tis the giving of thy heart to Christ, and receiving of him, and believing in him. Hath he been at such pains, and taken thy rotten righteousness away, and now comes and offers himself to thee, beseeches thee to love him, looses all thy objections? oh slight not this great salvation: slight any duty, but trample not on love; love for love is the least that can be given, Heb. ii. 3. 5thly, *Without faith 'tis impossible to please God.* Pray, suffer and do what thou wilt, all is abomination if not in faith; I care for nothing if this be wanting, saith the Lord, Heb. xi. 6. 6thly, The forest punishments are abiding unbelief; and therefore, if thou refuse this offer, all thy sins that ever thou did, thy blasphemy, sabbath-breaking, &c. will be but as flea-bites to this, Acts xiii. 41. It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and^e Gomorrah than for thee: better never have prayed, but lived a profane Atheist, than come this length and stick; God will go away shortly, and thou shalt wander and decay, and one to a hundred but thou sin that sin against the Holy Ghost, Heb. vi. 6. for never wast thou indeed enlightened till now; and now refuse, and let this heat cool, and thou mayst be hardened. 7thly, Consider, if Christ were now in thy chamber, and were bidding and intreating thee with tears in his eyes to receive him, and offering himself to thee, and saying to thee, O thou wretchedest of sinners, by all these sorrows I endured for thee, I adjure thee grieve me no more with thine unbelief, but receive me and my offers, and so glorify my grace: wouldst thou not do it, and wonder at this love? Oh Christ doth it as really now, Rom. x. 8. *The word is near thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart.* 8thly, Consider what thou shalt have by this: thou shalt get life, light,

est and consolation; and that which in vain
 had been seeking by thy own righteousness,
 shall by faith get, nay, be able to work im-
 possible things; thy dead heart shall live, thy
 eyes shall see him, thy lame hands and feet
 shall stand up and work, and by this way only shalt
 thou have peace. With these and the like argu-
 ments did the Lord court my soul to himself
 and the Lord did by suitable providences back-
 set of his word upon my spirit; for on a day
 of great humiliation it was my ordinary to read
 the first and second epistle of Peter, where so much
 is said of faith: the Lord likewise made *Shep-
 herd and Believer* useful to me, which till now
 I never understood; then all scriptures
 concerning faith, and treatises speaking thereof,
 meditations of it, were sweet, which now I
 find something to understand. I was now come
 out of the old to a new world, and there was such a
 change on my spirit as I never found the like be-
 fore. I would I believe, but ah I could not!
 When I had a spirit of resistance, there was a blind-
 ness on my eyes; I knew not what believing
 was, or on whom. On the one hand, the Lord
 gave commands, motives, earnest and real invi-
 tations, promises, and answering objections, yea,
 terrible threatnings in case of unbelief, hast-
 ened and pushing me forward, and that spec-
 tacle of all doors were shut but this of faith:
 I could neither pray nor do any thing, in re-
 spect of the sinfulness of it without faith, and
 yet this behoved to be my first work. On
 the other hand, ignorance of Christ, and of the
 way of believing, and fear of presumption and
 depending on my own strength, did toss me like a
 reeling man; I knew not what to do, but like a weak
 creature stuck in the birth: Oh, said I, how can I
 believe!

believe ! *Lord, help my unbelief*, and pity me, thou that hast been with me so wonderfully thro' the great and terrible wilderness, and brought me even to the borders of the good land ; Oh help here. Sometimes I would think it were better I had never come this length : my greatest objection was, that I did not see the glory of Christ ; and tho' I should believe, yet without this it would not be an effectual believing, and so would prove but a dead faith ; and likewise I knew not what faith was. Well, said the Lord, do but rely on Christ for life and affection with some confidence that he will help thee, and I seek no more. In this and to this I found some strength, and then I endeavoured it, and said, behold I come to thee, Lord ; do not thou cast me off. But the Lord said, come not only to see what Christ will do with thee, but likewise rest upon and believe from his goodness that he will do all that thou stands in need of. Well then, answered my heart, since it is so, I will take my hazard, and on thee I cast myself, come of it what will. And verily that which seem'd in my most serious exercise to be the notion of faith by which I closed with Christ was, a certain kind of perswasion and rest in it, that I had, the Lord would do me good, and help me in all things : and the great thing that was press'd upon me was, not to doubt of Christ, especially his good-will ; in which in some measure I rested.

7. I was afterward more confirmed in this ; for in this case I continued for fourteen days much after one way, still looking for some great thing, but found nothing. And then a new objection came in, which was this, tho' it was my duty to believe, yet, if I had really beleived, there would something have followed ; but Oh I find nothing
after

after my closing : surely I have laid my pipes short of the fountain ; I am as blind, as dead, as unholy as ever : I will to my prison again, till Christ himself come and redeem me with a strong hand ; for it seems I have come forth without a warrant : and so became discouraged, and did pull up the roots and razed the foundations again. But the Lord trysted me with a suitable word from Mr. Shepherd to this objection, shewing that a soul may come to Christ, and yet at first find nothing ; and then, saith he, the same reason (*viz.* Emptiness) that moved thee to come, the same should make thee stay with Christ ; and 'tis usual with the Lord's people to get nothing at first, Hof. vi. 1. *Let us return unto the Lord, for he will heal us.* Oh, say they, we got nothing, we find no healing or life. No, saith he, tho' the first day ye get nothing, nor yet the next, yet *after two days he will revive us, and the third day we will stand up in his sight.* This cured the wound something ; but the fresh apprehensions of presumption and catching hold on a lie, with the sense of unworthiness, and believing in my own strength, did like a violent storm raze all foundations, so as thro' pettishness, fear, unbelief and impatience, I said, I will to my prison again, I will pluck up my anchor again ; and therefore resolved I would make a doleful and heavy complaint to God : but, when I was going to my knees, e'er ever I had spoken a word to the Lord, it was suggested to me thus ; dost thou think, seeing thou rejectest my Son, and wilt not trust in him, that ever thy peeping or sorrows will be accepted by me ? is not every thing that is not done in faith abomination ? thou mayst well think by prayer to offend God more, but never think that the Lord henceforth will do any thing for thee, seeing there is

no faith; for God hears no prayers but in
 I saw by this a necessity of believing, and
 what I could. Well, said I, O Lord, since
 so, that I must of necessity believe, against
 and reason, and as I can, I do listen myself
 thee, and trust thou wilt save me from a
 sins; and tho' this be counted presumption
 I will trust in him: and was much strengthened
 herein from Job xiii. 15. *Tho' he kill me, I
 I trust in him; tho' all things seem to cry
 and die, and tho' for my presumption he
 kill me, yet I will trust in him; and now,
 since I have sealed this bargain, and closed
 thee, send strength, not for any thing in
 because now I am thy servant, that I make
 our thee my master.*

8. I had no sooner spoken these words
 the Lord revealed himself and his love by
 evidence of my sincerity in that petition, when
 I perceived, that, laying aside mine own
 sought grace to honour him; and by this
 the spirit I became assured with joy and peace
 am not selfish, said I, in seeking grace; I
 for Christ's ends, to honour him; there
 have been sincere, and helped to believe
 were my eyes opened to see love in all
 tions. Oh this was a heart-ravishing con-
 tion! the Lord, that followed me many a
 day, never rested till he had completed his
 with me, and till he had engaged me to him.
 Oh the love of Christ! if Christ had no power
 help a poor sinner, but had love, he would
 die over it, such is his love.

9. I was thinking whether this was but
 common work, or was it special saving grace?
 am induced to believe and to think it a
 sincere faith, by these grounds; 1st, It

wrought by the Lord himself, tho' small and ; it was a faith of the operation of God, i. 19, 20. and ii. 8. Col. ii. 12. It was not y own making and devising : and I shall not : that a presumption which he warranted me , and which I did in obedience to his com- l, nor that a delusion which his spirit wrought.

It was grounded on the word, not on sense ; ie word of his command, Eph. ii. 20. And o presumption to believe what he commands.

It purified the heart, and made me prize lesire grace, and made me desire that mainly hrist's ends, to honour him; Eph. i. 13.

xv. 9. 1 John iii. 3. 4thly, It filled me *Joy and Peace*, Rom. v. 2, 3, 4. 1 Pet. i. 8. I was satisfied with my condition, and went a- the fields singing songs of triumph over Sa- Oh, said I, did I ever see this day, or ex- to see it? 5thly, I was fitted and prepared ; for it was after much humiliation, bur- ing and wearying; Mat. xi. 28. 6thly, It ghtened me ; for I cried out, what shall I now or the Lord, who hath heard my sorrows afflictions? this joy of the Lord was my gth, Neh. viii. 10 Prov. xvii 22. 7thly, It the Lord Jesus precious ; I was made to see ry; an excellency and loveliness in him : and token of a sound faith that exalts Christ, . ii. 7. 8thly, I was made to resolve to pay ows which I made in afflictions and straits when at the college under convictions, and er time in confirmation of this when in the rness, which was this, that if the Lord would er me out of that condition in which I was, give me assurance of his love, and acquaint n some measure with the ways of God and lian exercises, especially faith and patience, thereby I might better inform others, and

that before I was twenty five years of age, that then, if I were in the kingdom, I should serve him in the ministry. The Lord heard me; so as I thought I was bound. Then did I set myself wholly to serve the Lord: and in this frame I continued for a week, tho' not in that extasy of joy; yet in that peace and tranquility of mind; my heart, being staid by faith, was kept in perfect peace, which, thro' my dying vanishing frame of spirit, it could never be.

10. Yet notwithstanding this faith had many cracks in it, and many defects, which encouraged Satan to make an assault, which he made thereafter. It had these imperfections; 1st, Less discovered of the power of God in making me close with the promise, than in discovering my duty; and inclining me to believe: there was much of this faith wrought by my own power, which made Satan brangle it upon this very head. 2dly, I secretly rested, after I believed, in the act of faith rather than in the object of faith, and drew comfort from this more than from the object Christ holden out in the gospel. 3dly, I was more convinced that believing was my duty, than I understood what believing was; the equity of believing appeared but not the rationality. I was not so convinced of the grounds of believing; and therefore was I confused, and utterly at a loss what to believe: for generals could not be a ground of particular application, without which I could not have peace. Nor had I peace in the bare hopes that Christ would save me, because faith and hope appear to me to be different. 4thly, And the ground of all this was, tho' the gospel revealed to me my duty formally and clearly, yet not the object of faith, the covenant of grace giving Christ himself; of whom tho' I had some knowledge as of one able to save me, and who was only my up-
making.

g, yet at this time I knew him not so distinctly in his offices and offers, nor in the grounds of believing, till afterwards; nor was I so intimate with the nature of absolute promises, and each, till afterwards. 5thly, I looked too far for something from Christ's life and resurrection, and did not so expressly and distinctly I did really) close for himself. 6thly, I looked for spiritual benefits, but not for temporal ones. 7thly, I limited the holy one of Israel; made but use of faith for a time, until it conveyed sense of life and consolation: and expected immediately, or shortly after I had died; and that, when that sense came, there never be a change again; and no use made, but fair days from henceforth. I did not account to wait all the days of my appointment; and therefore, not laying my account on trouble and long desertions, the storm that after blew overthrew me.

The end of which dispensation, I think, acquainted me more distinctly and clearly with the method of effectual calling, which for I had not so clearly known. 2dly, To enable me to live the life of faith, and to wean me from sense. 3dly, To acquaint me with his love, manifest and give proof thereof to me: appeared clearly in this work; for when I was dreaming of faith, when all that ever I could not clear me what it was, nor suspected a duty, and when multiplied objections were in my way, Oh how clearly did he loose them! how lovingly, how incessantly, how condescendingly to my weakness, earnestly and strongly did he draw! and, lest I should doubt that he was well pleased with what done, he sealed it with the budding forth

of sanctification, with joy and assurance. But in nothing am I more assured that this was true faith, than by the Lord's constant preserving it, notwithstanding of all temptations; *When I was young he loved me, and led me by the arms, teaching me to go*, Hof. xi. 1, 3. and in this he appeared the main doer. 4thly, His end was to bring me to rest which is by faith: not to a rest from labour or work, nor a rest from temptations, afflictions and sorrows, and wandrings now and then; but to a rest of security and settlement from fears. For, till the soul close with Christ, it never hath any ground of security or peace; then hath a man strength to perform duties, a balm against the sting of sin in the conscience, an undoubted evident and security for heaven, an undoubted strength to flee to in all extremities; 'tis now not like a wave in the sea tossed to and fro, but 'tis fixed and centred.

12. From this I observe, 1st, That before a soul can believe, he must be called of God; for else no man would, could or should come, Rom. viii. 30. 1 Cor. i. 2. Jer. iii. 22. 2dly, That the immediate end of effectual calling is to receive Christ by faith, or to believe in and rest on him for all things, John vi. 28, 29. Mat xxii. 3. Isa. lv. 1. For tho' the saints be said to be called to heaven, to peace, to be holy; yet is not this the immediate end of effectual calling, but, as I said, to receive Jesus Christ and all things freely offered in the gospel. 3dly, As it is God that calls, so it is God that maketh to answer this call; and the creature is but merely passive, 1 Pet. ii. 9. 4thly, This call is inward as well as outward, born in upon our spirit; God takes a dealing with the heart, Hof. ii. 14. For the outward call will never do it; *I will call her to the wilderness, and speak*

to her heart; Jer. xxxi. 33. 2 Cor. iii. 3. 5thly, This call is a glorious call, and stamped with majesty and authority. As it is the Lord that calls, so doth he stamp his own name on it, so that the soul knows it is God that is dealing with him: and so, *where the word of a king is there is power, and who may say unto him, What doest thou?* 6thly, This call is in the word, or by it, Rom. x. 16, 17. not by dumb enthusiasms, superstitions, or a mere providence: It was by the word I was convinced it was a duty to believe, the word gave me motives, and loosed my objections, all my warrants were from the word. 7thly, Faith is neither to love Christ, or to be content to take him; for that is wrought already: (to love a person, and to be content to marry him, is not marriage; it is but a disposition to marriage.) Nor yet to believe that he is able to save, or to hope; but it is to believe on Christ that he is yours, and will bestow himself and all things on you; and, when thus you believe, you have it: Or, it is a cordial assent, and particular application of the promises, giving Christ and all his benefits. Give but a particular and cordial assent to the gospel, and that is believing; and he never heard the gospel, to whom it spoke not this. I have largely proven this elsewhere; I now give my experience, 1 Tim. i. 15. 8thly, The grounds of faith are the command of God, the offer of the gospel, but especially the gospel-declaration and promise, which at that time was not revealed to me, Mat. xi. 28 2 Cor. v. 19, 20, 21. The new testament ministers beseech all to be reconciled, and upon this ground, because he hath *made him sin for us, who knew no sin*; this is the rational ground of believing: The command is the moral ground of believing, God giving Christ freely, and making him sin, and our covenant,

nant, and forgiving in his name; and the gospel declaring this: Hence it is more than a naked offer. 9thly, Altho' it be the duty of all to believe, and though preparatory qualifications give no right to believe or come to Christ; yet is Christ never revealed effectually to save a soul; until in some measure that soul be made to find its own emptiness and want of self-righteousness: It is the Blind and the Lame that are compelled to come, Luke xiv. 21, 23. Mat. xi. 28: John ix. 39. Prov. ix 4, 5. 10thly, True humiliation doth not consist in legal terrors; and one, sufficiently humbled for sin, may yet be under apprehensions and sense of deadness, Isa lxiii. 17. Psal. lxxx. 18. Nor yet in the continuance of terrors; else the damned in hell should be most humbled: only it is rather a conviction of the want of all things; raising a dissatisfaction with the present condition, and a despair of self, and a justifying of God in all matters. Yea, the truest preparations for Christ are a sense and conviction of vileness, guiltiness, deadness, hardness, blindness, and a weariedness with the world and duties and the ill heart. 11thly, The heart truly humbled must be touched with original corruption and heart-plagues, and a state of distance and enmity, John xvi. 9. 12thly, Tho' all be humbled, all are not alike humbled; so, tho' all believers be drawn to Christ and united to him, yet are not all drawn in the same manner to Christ: to some heaven as it were is opened, the Lord revealing the glory of Jesus to them, so as they without a hinck leave all; and come flying to him, Mat. xiii. 44. So as the soul is so overpowered, that it cannot but cling to the Lord Jesus. There are others that are under deep horrors, and brought down to hell, and distracted with terrors; and Christ is lovely as one that
saves

aves from wrath and hell. Necessity makes them
 flee to the city of refuge, Acts ii. 37. Heb. vi. 18.
 Psal. cxliii. 9. Some; under a sense of a dead,
 blind, empty heart, flee to him for life and eye-
 alive more expressly, Prov. ix. 4. Jer. xxxi. 18, 19.
 Isai. xiv. 1. Rev. iii. 18. Some find they cannot
 come; they desire the Lord to do it, Lam. v. 21.
 Jer. xxxii. 18. Some by the sense of a command do
 desperately venture, and their faith is an act of
 foolishness, Job xiii. 15. Some come to Christ, and
 they hang (having his promise, *That whosoever
 comes he will in nowise cast off*) by expectations,
 hope and desire, until a greater window be open-
 ed in heaven; and then they clearly receive Christ;
 when the Lord Jesus is given, so as the everlast-
 ing doors are opened, Psal. xxiv. 7, 9. Not
 that these doors were not opened before, but be-
 cause the frame of heart was not so discovered;
 nor a desire after Christ, and a believing what the
 Gospel saith, and a hope upon this, is a real, tho'
 not a sensible, receiving of Christ; only time
 hath ordinarily manifest the reality of this. Some
 come with Christ by way of a marriage-consent
 and contract, Christ overcoming the heart by
 love, Hos. ii. 19, 20. Eph. v. 25. Jer. xxxi. 33.
 and 1. 5. Some come to Christ by way of look-
 ing to him; in some their faith is but a hope, or
 hath resemble it. 13thly, Love is the key that
 opens the heart, Rom. x. 10. *With the heart man
 believes to salvation.* Hos. ii. 19, 20. which love
 hath kyth in a mourning for want of him, and a
 desire after him, and a rejoicing in any thing that
 appears like him, and a love unto his people
 and, as there is affection in his people to him, so
 there love kythed in the Lord's courting of his
 people: the command itself, Turn, hath love en-
 raven on it; the Lord's so earnest seeking of it,
 his

his large offers to gain this. 14thly, The soul is believing closes with the person of Christ (he is the principal object, tho' not the immediate object of faith) and closes with him only and for ever; the soul desires this, and mourns that it is not so: *take away all sins*, Hof. xiv. 3. Jer. l. 5. Psal. xc. 1. For to come to Christ for his benefits only is not a personal love; to come to Christ, but not to him only, is an adulterous marriage; to come to him for sometime, and not for ever, is but to give Christ a visit, not to marry him. 15thly, The whole life of a man is a continued conversion to God, in which he is perpetually humbled under sense of sin, and draws nearer and nearer to God with more fervent faith and love; and daily walks closer and closer with the Lord, endeavouring to perfection, Mat. xviii. 3. Luke xxii. 32. Prov. xxiii. 26. Cant. iv. 8. Psal. lxi. 7. And God doth as it were act over and over again his work in the heart, forming his people more exactly than before: and therefore no wonder they meet with something like a second, yea, and a third and fourth conversion; especially where there are backslidings. 16thly, True faith is lively and fruitful; for it strengthens, settles and sanctifies the heart, 1 Jo. iii. 3. Acts xv. 9. 17thly, There may be faith in the heart, tho' it doth not manifest itself in express acts of believing to those that have it: yea, there may be great ignorance of the nature of faith in speculation; as the child lives, tho' he knows not that it is so, nor can tell the concept of life, Jo. xiv. 7, 8. compared with v. 16, 17. Acts xix. 2. 18thly, Wherever God begins to do good, either to reveal or quicken, he will not leave off, but will manifest himself more and more, Jo. xiii. 7. Mat. xiii. 31. he will perfect his work unto the end. 19thly,

19thly, There may be a real closing with Christ, and yet felt deadness and hardness. A sick faith is a living faith, John v. 40. and xi. 25. nor is the soul in this case to stand at a distance with Christ. 20thly, The *Kingdom of heaven*, either outward or inward, *cometh not with observation*, John iv. 14. and the foundations of the temple may be matter of mourning, and little glory seen therein; *the day of small things*; a great stream may proceed from a small fountain. The Lord comes not in the thunder nor earthquake, but in the *still voice*. We think, like Naaman, that when God comes to the heart, he will appear in visible glory, as sometimes he doth; yet at other times his voice is not heard in the streets, and he *groweth as a tender plant out of the dry ground*, and there is little beauty seen in him. What a poor beginning was all this of a life of faith?

CHAP. VI.

Of my progress, and growth, and establishment in the ways of God.

SECT. I.

How after closing with Christ by faith I was assaulted with terrible temptations, and how delivered.

I Continued in some peace for ten days time, still expecting some extraordinary thing, but had not the impressions of joy I had in the beginning so deep upon my heart as at the first; there came a cloud and overshadowed me thus.

1. The Lord left me as to that measure of his comforting

comforting and quickening presence; for here in the world is not rest, but a place of labour, change, sorrow and pain: and therefore I behoved to draw in the yoke. 2dly, I liked ease and rest; and now, when the Lord had broken my bonds and yoke, I thought there was no more for me to do, I dream'd of no cloud or night: and, since the main was secured, I did not apprehend such a necessity of labour, but would have been at sleeping in my nest; or else, if I must needs pray and fight, I desired to be taken up in Christ's arms as I was at first, and to be passive, and Christ to do all, Hof. xi. 3. Psal. xxx. 6. *I said, like Peter, It is good to be here;* and I said. *Let us make a tabernacle:* Until a cloud overshadowed me, which when it did, I expecting in vain Christ's return in the same manner, I got other work to do. 3dly, Not finding ease, nor peace, nor rest in God, because I would not dig for it, I behoved to have it from the world, and therefore turned slothful, and for sometime followed vanities, seeking rest; until (reproved) I went to prayer, but got no good. I took up *Shepherd's Sound Believer*, and there I read this question, *How shall I know whether my whole soul hath come to Christ?* He answers, "When Christ alone gives sufficient satisfaction, so as there are no need of idols and lusts." For this, ah! said I, I do not thus; for my heart runs out continually after idols. How couldst thou think (said conscience) that was so dead, to close with Christ with the whole soul? Have not the effects discovered thy unsoundness and hypocrisy? See to the whorishness and adulteries of thy heart, and by that judge of thy love in marrying Christ: Doth not thy unsteadfastness in his covenant, prove that thy heart was not right with God at first, and that thou lied unto him,

When thou fought and closed with him as
 k of my salvation? I was made upon this
 lude that all my lifetime I was violently
 with a delusion; which made the sky very

This temptation was so violent as there
 resisting of it, whereby my heart became
 ful, strengthless and discouraged: Oh!
 all I, what should I, nay, what can I do
 Can I bestow more pains than I did? Have
 ed any thing? Then did I know the mean-

that word, *Thou hast lifted me up, and cast*
me down. To have known before, while I su-
 no less, that I was wrong, would not so
 taken me; as, after some assurance of fa-
 to be cast down to hell; heart and hand
 ken away from me; I did not reason
 utter, but yielded easily and quickly: now
 y foundations shaken, and a breach made
 my interest in God; and in the grounds
 the Lord had made me lay; a whole sea
 ed. 4thly, This was not enough: Satan
 t out upon me, to trouble me with athe-
 thoughts, which had like serpents been his-
 nd had appeared, but were quieted tho'
 led; a certain token that they would, when
 n offered, break out most violently. Oh

what a delusion have I been in? I was ne-
 vinced nor humbled, nay, I think never
 ced that there was a God, or that his word
 ie. Now, the Lord leaving me, and Satan
 permitted, and being with former exercises
 lly melancholy, atheistical temptations were
 most violently upon me, upon which great
 ensible horror fell upon my spirit; which
 se, not so much from the thoughts of this
 ere was no God, as from the thoughts that
 was an atheist, and that I had not a lively
 strative argument for proving effectually

K

and

and powerfully that there is a God. Oh miserable creature, cried I, that perish'd not at first when under horror, e'er I had known any thing of God, but to live till now, till I had contracted more guilt and punishment! O happy when I thought I had sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost! for then there were hopes that, while I believed the scriptures, by them I might be persuaded that I had not sinned it; but now no remedy is left: when the foundations are loosed, what means can I use? to whom shall I go, when I doubt the being of God? how shall I be convinced? how shall I pray? 5thly, Looking to the dispensation I was under, and the remedilessness of my condition, and the sadness of this providence, my melancholy thoughts, of which Satan made his use, represented God as terrible and fearful to me, as one who had been watching all my lifetime to do me evil, that had been deluding me with frames of spirit, and that was now manifesting that hid displeasure against me which he bore me this long time, and let me see he would take vengeance of me. I thought, or apprehended, God's wrath and prejudice was more at my person than faults; in a word, God was terrible and fearful to me, so that I was all taken out of other, and disjointed. 6thly, This fire did make the great scum and filth of rebellion appear, and that hatred that was in my heart against God appear: my natural corruptions were stirred more violently than ever, in averseness to God; and so, *when the law came, sin revived, and I died.* He was fearful to me; the reading of scripture and prayer had no taste, nay, these means were terrible to me, so as it was much that put me to duty at all. Oh how happy then (said I) when under my first terrors, by what I am at this time!

while

terrors formerly were upon me, I could
 delight in prayer and other means, which
 exceeding sweet unto me; but now, alas!
 are a burden, a wearisomness and terror
 ne, and occasionally increase my trouble :
 whenever I read scripture, a thousand athe-
 thoughts were injected in my soul; and
 ore my case is most hopeless. Now the Lord
 ne not, and my soul abhors him; my heart
 icked, that tho' with Spira, I say it not with
 ngue, yet wish I that there were no God ;
 strange and terrible unto me, an enemy,
 herefore hateful to me. Then did I find
 he carnal mind is enmity against God; I
 right representation of the damned in hell,
 nted and hopeless, and, raging against God
 is providences, sometimes I would say, what
 ge thing is this! thou thinkest there is no
 and yet art afraid of him. The truth is, I
 it positively believe that there is no God, but
 raid that I did not believe that there was
 and my fear of God did prove a God, and
 lief of a deity. 7thly, It did not a little
 en my sorrows, that I was within fourteen
 o partake of the sacrament : the condition I
 1, and the want of the evidences of grace,
 me look on communicating as a dreadful
 fs; and the pride of my heart was such,
 aving been known for a professor, and to
 esolved to communicate, it would be thought
 kness not to communicate, and hazard my
 tion with them : and for this cause I was
 ore diligent to get oil, and to get my wed-
 garment on; but found not such returns as
 the like occasions I had hitherto found,
 thro' sloth, and partly thro' the pride of
 heart; so that I was, on the sabbath-day

morning that I was to communicate, in as sad a
 taking as I was ever before, utterly jumbled, and
 at a distance with God, and full of horror and
 atheistical temptations. 8thly, 'Tis true, that
 for some time it pleased God to suspend these
 storms, and to give a calm, by binding up Satan
 for a time; and it continued thus until for three
 days before my communicating. I wondered how
 they could be removed, when the cause was not
 taken away; and therefore they came again, so as,
 when I came to the table, they assaulted me.
 Then would I say to myself, Oh poor wretched
 soul, thou hast oftentimes desired a conviction
 and a law-work, and now thou hast one to pur-
 pose, and claw it off again if thou canst; see what
 good it doth thee: O how unkindly and diabolical
 are the convictions that are now-a-days! the
 occasion and ground of my trouble were atheistical
 temptations, and hard cruel thoughts of God,
 which Satan did violently beat in upon me; as
 likewise it did afflict me, that I could not get rid
 of all sin, and that I could not get resolved to do
 all duties, especially the duty of reproof, to which
 I was averse thro' my natural bashfulness. 9thly,
 My trouble was increased by communicating; espe-
 cially, by conversing with others, I found that
 the Lord that day had been distributing largely;
 and it was ordinary with them to express them-
 selves thus, *I have found him*. Oh, said I, and
 am I only a bastard? hath he given to every one
 their allowance and portion, and furnished and
 never so much as looked on me? this struck me
 dead, and I was no longer for company: the more
 spiritual sermons were, and societies were, the
 more was I troubled; I saw as it were them com-
 ing from east and west, and sitting with Abraham,
 Isaac and Jacob, and myself among those that
 were

rust out : meat, company, and all ordi-
 were a burden to me ; I sat alone, and
 res were heavy with sorrow. Oh (said I)
 e wilderness, that I might lament in, and
 at this miserable soul of mine in the Lord's
 my hopes were gone, and I said, fare-
 pleasant days again, and now henceforth
 ntring the gloomy valley and shadow of

No means would do me good : I looked
 fr. Baxter's arguments for the truth of
 ptures, but they seemed as straw to me,
 distempered spirit brake through them :
 eistical reasonings would shift after this
 ; what knowest thou but that the apos-
 s were Christ's immediate successors, out
 to him and to their imaginations, might
 me to far-off places and there vented their
 es, which thro' process of time might have
 nfirm'd by proselytes, who by the apostles
 ht have been drawn in ; and their follow-
 ile there was no Printing, might have
 and, being for a long time unquarrell'd,
 thro' custom have gained a belief ? in a
 ill I could say or hear seem'd but weak,
 o perswade me, or to give me peace. Af-
 sacrament, and after my home-coming,
 rors increas'd, and temptations assaulted
 iolently, as that I was taken off my knees,
 ild not pray one word ; nay, they were
 nt, and my fears so strong, as that I judg-
 could not be removed but by a miracle :
 ould (said I) seek no other evidence of a
 power and being, than the removing these :
 and I thought, if the Lord would conde-
 s this, I should doubt no more. Then
 uggested to me thus ; thy heart was once
 e, so careless, that it needed an Almighty

power to awaken thee as now thou art ; and not the Lord, who hath wounded thy often deemed impenetrable heart, heal it again?

2. This was my condition ; and the Lord delivering, and did deliver me by these steps means, which did kyth the working of grace in my soul, and his kindness. First, I was continually to seek the Lord in the use of means notwithstanding of all my discouragements ; I prayed, read and meditated ; and some healing would find in these, but a cloud still came overshadowed it ; however they did good in part. One time, being at supper, some of relations and strangers fell a commending a carnal and persecuting minister, who was against me to the ways and people of God : I started and said in a great zeal, that he was not worth to live, and that the Lord would be about him. Here was a well, if I could see it ; sayest thou hatest God, and how canst thou love his people, and hate his enemies, as thou shewest thou dost ? *He that loveth him that loveth them also that are begotten.* But reason

- weak for bearing down of downright temptations ; Being in Mr. T. H. his house, a godly prudent man, his company did me much good ; especially his discourses to me concerning the nature of temptations, and how the devil begets temptations violently in the soul without words and dings them in as it were, and threats by assertions on the soul what he would have his will : as likewise, his prayers did me good especially when he spake of God's condescension and man's stubbornness ; and cited Eph. 2. 1. *whom God smote, and he went on frowardly in his ways ; I have seen him, and will heal him : as a wise wife, the marvelous light he gave to scrip-*

depth in them that I never perceived the wonderful connexion of which did astonish me, and made evidencing a godhead even in universal excellency hid in them. Last conversation, not in a carnal way, his joy was inward, proceeding from : for the universal carnality of their discouragements, living foundations, did much help forward : made me think that a saint was

truly I thought mine eyes saw saint and new testament spirit in new-way perswaded, by seeing his usefulness in God, and his deep mysteries, that there was a God, attainable: And such was the power of him, that with his seasonable power he would charm, and calm storms, even when I despaired of it as impossible; tho' they would not when I was gone from him. Surely good by him. 4thly, But that dead-stroke to this temptation came from that minister's house, thoughts recurred and assaulted me as my soul was vexed unto could bide it no longer, and thro' temptations was taken off my mind so much as to knit four sentences at last sat down on my knees, and said; Lord if thou BE, thou art canst reveal so much of thyself as : and put away this storm; I desire to give this proof of thy power is night to put away this storm, there is a God, and that thy word

word is true. Lord, be not offended with my peremptoriness, for I can bear no longer; and besides, if thou delay the revelation of thy mind herein, my suspicious heart will be ready to say, that it was time that altered my condition; and, if this very night thou do, I will look upon it as a sufficient demonstration of thy being: determine thou the way thyself; I have opened my mouth. Lord, bow the heavens, and give not by the continuance of my trouble such a ground of cavil to the adversary against me, to make me doubt thou art the hearer of prayer. Immediately it was suggested; now hold by thy word, said Satan, and thou shalt see God will not help thee this night, and let this increase thy suspicions; for sure, if there were a God, he would help when so put to it. But the Lord did bow the heavens: for, sitting pensively at the fire-side, and meditating on some rational arguments for clearing of the verity of the scriptures, and not finding any but such as might be shifted; at last it was suggested to me, and I was made to fall on these considerations; what a fool hast thou been? art thou an atheist, because thou canst not prove there is a God? or, is there no God, because thou canst not demonstratively prove it? suppose it possible then that a number of honest men might lie; and that the world were so mad as to believe them, and that this lie had been carried so secretly on as never to be discovered; and all evidences to the contrary burnt when the world universally turned christians; tho' this were possible, is it therefore true? have ye ever seen an argument to prove there is no God, or that the scriptures are false? but grant that the scriptures are true ('tis possible) what evidence could ye have of their truth that ye have not! the doctrine itself is contrary to *flesh* and blood, against lying and juggling, con-
firmes

Armed by miracles, done before the world and
 amidst enemies, for a long time printed copies
 in so many thousand hands in different countries
 and kingdoms, delivered by the most holy inge-
 nuous and faithful men, and not contradicted by
 enemies : suppose, I say, all this course had been
 taken as the greatest evidence of its truth, would
 there not still be place for such objections as now
 thou heaps ? what more evidence would you have
 than this ? doth it follow, because such shifts
 may be given, that therefore the doctrine is not
 true ? might not all thy answers thou givest be
 given against it, tho' undoubtedly true ? there
 appeared such an evidence in this reasoning, the
 Lord shining upon it, that by the Almighty power
 of Christ my clouds did fly away ; the bands in
 which I had been secretly holden ever since I was
 born, but not openly and violently kept, did in
 an instant break asunder, and all my fears evan-
 ished, and there was a calm : in which God did
 shew much goodness and power and condescen-
 dency, who looked so seasonably upon me ; for,
 if this night had passed over, the greatest evidence
 imaginable, I could have gotten matter of objec-
 tion against it. Some dregs of this trouble re-
 mained, but I was delivered out of it ; and after
 this continued half a year like one in a dead-throw ;
 had little sense, wrestling with several temptations
 and difficulties. About this time there broke out a
 great sluice of profanity and persecution ; the men
 of power cried down godliness, covenant, and
 work of reformation ; godly ministers were des-
 posed, and wicked scandalous ministers set up in
 their places ; and none counted loyal but such as
 could swear and health ; and godliness was a
 crime sufficient. Lord, what a world was this !
 nothing but drinking, swearing, mocking of
 godliness,

godliness, and the freedom of the country lost; for some three months after this my condition was as the dawning of the day.

3. The ends of which dispensation were, 1st, To give proof to me of the Lord's condescendency and love; which I very eminently saw in this 2^{dly}, To convince me by a strong hand of my atheism, and, by healing me in such a forlorn condition, shewing an infinite power: for atheistical thoughts came divers times before this to my door, but these unclean spirits went out, and were not cast out, and therefore came again; until this now, as it were in a pitched battle, they were overthrown and cast out with a strong hand, and never after was I troubled with them. 3^{dly}, To awaken me out of security, and to keep me from it in time to come, that I might not rest in enjoyments, but, *forgetting what is behind, many press forwards*; to keep me waking, exercised and busy: I slept, and therefore this cry came. 4^{thly}, To discover my wickedness, misery and weakness, when left of God and given up to myself; *we are all* *unto them when I leave them*. 5^{thly}, To put me out of conceit with legal terrors; for I thought they were good, and only esteemed them happy that were under them; they came, but I found they did me ill; and, unless the Lord had guided me thus, I think I would have died doting after them. 6^{thly}, To mortify me to extraordinary enlargements; for I found they never come but a clap comes after them. That which so afflicted me, in this condition, was my ignorance, and want of sufficient knowledge of the object of believing, and too much haste in yielding to what Satan said, and some evil principles I had; for I thought it was sinful in me to seek to strengthen

ngthen my soul, or to comfort it: I did not remember former experiences.

From which I learn, 1st, Weak faith, or h in the beginning, is never able to endure ults of temptations; and therefore God him- must help immediately, Mat. viii. 25, 26. y, There may be much of God in a dispensa- , and much to be learned; and yet not noti- at first till a long time thereafter; for it is not g since I saw the well of waters that was here, in xiii. 7. Deut. viii. 3. *In the latter end you ll consider it.* 3dly, As the devil seeks to un- mine folk in their strongest bulwarks, so must

Lord with a strong hand convince of, and ch fundamental principles, and amongst the : perswade that there is a God, Mat. xvi. 17. or, xii. 3. natural belief and evidence must ists in supernaturals. 4thly, No natural or ional evidence is sufficient to convince of athe- ; for all that either I could meditate or read books, could not do my turn, nor cure my a- ism, Mat. xvi. 17. *Flesh and blood hath not re- ded this. Peace is a created thing of God, Isa. i. 19.* 5thly, Fears arising, in faints, from nptations of atheism. do proceed from this ound, because they suspect they are atheists; ther than from this, that they indeed believe ere is no God: for I feared I should be damned r my atheism. 6thly, Christ outshoots Satan his own bow: the devil sought by these temp- tions to shake me loose of all my principles, and ke me despair; and God blest it to be the mean my establishing, Gen. 1. 20. Psal. cxix. 71. e Lord pitied me when he saw the devil's vio- ace; and, whatever the beginnings of trouble , yet the end is peace and good. 7thly, There no case imaginable desperate, in which a man is

to give over his hope: for here was as hoped
 case as ever any was in, there being no means
 help, no grace in me, but stubbornness, and w
 tling with God, none able to help me, all gi
 over, the foundation shaken; and yet out of
 I was helped. 8thly, E'er the devil be dung
 of any principal fort, there is ordinarily a g
 storm raised; he is not dung out without ne
 and principal substantial truths are not cl
 bought. 9thly, An evil under which the
 mourns, is burdened, and which it lothes,
 never destroy a man; 'tis ill entertained
 destroy the soul. 10thly, God ever helps,
 never until extremity, Deut. xxxii. 36. Isa.
 17. when the spirit begins to fail. 11thly
 While we are here, we must resolve to meet
 one evil after another to grapple with: here is
 the land of rest or peace; *in the world ye shall*
tribulation, either inward or outward, or t
 John xvi. ult. I had no sooner come out of
 wilderness, and was thinking to *multiply my da*
the sand, in peace, but this storm came: *th*
not your rest; there remaineth a rest for the peop
God. 12thly, As there are troubles, so are t
 deliverances out of troubles; *many are the tri*
of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him
them all. No trouble is a saint's dea
 'tis not unto death, Psal. xxxiv. 19. *Bi*
vil shall slay the wicked, v. 21. 13thly, God
 flits in measure, he puts no more weight
 the soul than 'tis able to bear: I had little
 outward afflictions to grapple with; now,
 Lord *stay'd his east wind in the day of his rough*
 Isa. xxvii. 8. the foundations of the great d
 which afterwards broke out, were not yet o
 ed. 14thly, Violent temptations last not l
 when the devil turns violent, his best arrow;

stone: *nil vehemens durable*. 15thly, A saint's first exercises are ordinarily in spirituals, e'er he be set to conflict with outward troubles, that he be not turned carnal by them, but, being somewhat acquainted with the Lord's ways, may be more spiritual in his outward exercises: the Lord trains him up privately, as it were; e'er he set him out to fight. 16thly, As 'tis ordinary with young beginners to refuse to be comforted, and to join with Satan: so do they ordinarily fail therein, and refuse to be comforted, thinking it sinful: I might had many things to comfort me, had I heeded; and 'tis the worst they can do. 17thly, Altho' God saves ordinarily by means, yet it is not any vertue that's in the means that helps, but is the Lord concurring with this or that mean. Altho' I grant an aptitude or rationality in the means, yet, by reason of the resistance in the subject, they are ineffectual: it was a rational consideration saved me, but I had rejected many great evidences; and I found, besides the rationality of the object, some other thing concurring, working physically, Mat. iv. 4. Hof. i. 7. Deut. viii. 3. *That thou mightst know man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. So that, 18thly, I found not only a moral suasion on the understanding and will, but even, besides, some physical sensible touch of God's hand on the will, determining me and bowing to assent, taking away the resistance. 19thly, Pride and stubbornness is the sting and life of evils; and by submission the gall and venom and fire of them is taken away: this fastens our bonds on us, James iv. 6. *God resists the proud*. For I said, I would be content of terrors, but not to proceed from this ground of atheism, but from God, to shew me the evil of a

natural condition. When the Lord would remove his hand, I would be discontent ; now, said I, the Lord is gone, and hath not done his work, and I am as graceless as ever. 20thly, Seldom do mercies good when there is over much peremptoriness in asking them : more submission would have made my deliverance much sweeter, and thankfulness and contentment with little mercies would bring in much again, Psal. lxxviii. 29. Another storm behoved to humble me, and came a good while after, and did that which this did not ; only the Lord condescended to my importunity. 21stly, Extraordinary enjoyments are not to be anxiously desired, for they have *the day of adversity* set against them, Eccl. vii. 14. *God hath set the one against the other.* 22dly, Grace will some way appear in a man's lowest condition, tho' it be very weak. For I found something of submission from that word, Micah vii. 9. Love likewise appeared, and my heart said, *tho' he kill me, yet will I trust in him.* 23dly, God will deliver his people sometimes, tho' they be not very fitted for a deliverance ; and, tho' there be no preparation for him, he will come : for I may say, except prayer, which my extremity put me to, there was no grace exercised ; sin was not made bitter to me, there was no humiliation, no patience, no faith, no instruction learned, but roaring like a bull in the net, and crying like the raven ; and yet the Lord heard that voice, and delivered me, tho' in his justice the deliverance was not so sweet, as I observed before. 24thly, My doubts of the being of a God did arise more thro' want of a demonstrative argument to prove it positively, than from any argument to prove directly there was no God ; for the devil never offered to prove, there was no God, but put it on me to
 prove,

rove, and answered my arguments and objections; which was hard to do; and, because I could not prove it effectually, I would conclude that therefore there was no God.

SECT. II.

If a spiritual decay, and some afflictions I was tryed with for the space of two years.

MY pride, and hastiness to be delivered out of my last exercise, was one reason, I think, that I received no more profit than I did by it: our desires are not always best for us; the desires of the heart, and soul-leanness, go together, Psal. vi. 15. I was but a novice in believing, and so not kept in perfect peace.

1. I was then to go south, being in the year 1661; where I stayed from November I think till October thereafter, being to pay some money to a creditor; and to transact with some debtors, being at this time twenty one years of age; as likewise some business did interveen there, which took me up. It was now that I began some way to mind business; I should have gone to the college, but I was otherwise taken up: in a word, except it was to spend my time, I knew no good I did all that time; only I wrote some law. I came home at last, and was a little more taken up in duty when at home then when afield, but made no sensible progress, but was as it were in the dead-throw.

2. About this time my outward afflictions began to appear, and the Lord was bringing me low as to my condition in the world, by means

of a person who pretended right to all we had in the world, and had some colour of law for it, our securities not being well buckled ; and besides, he was an active man. He called me south, being cited for that effect ; where being come, and destitute of friends and money, the times being evil, and there being much corruption in courts, and my adversary being in great favour, and I unwilling to go to, and unskilful in law, and withal being conscious to the weakness of my own securities, I was forced and inclined to agree with him on what terms it pleased himself, giving him much of 12000 merks, which was a considerable part of my interest ; which to the ignorant and unacquainted with my affairs (as all were beside myself) did expose me to much disrespect and contempt, which I was forced with patience to bear, and did make me sail with a low sail. About the same time likewise I unadvisedly bound for the sum of 8000 merks of provisions to my sisters, they being to be married, and my mother life-renting all my estate, which was not now above 100 L. Sterling per annum ; which sums do daily run on interest, and consume my stock : and much of this I looked on as a punishment of my faults.

3. I lived and continued in these sins, which about this time did mightily prevail against me ; (1.) I omitted the excellent and precious occasions of getting and doing good, both in reference to myself and others, in spirituals and temporals, where I had occasions of sermons, of fellowship of saints, of books, of expeding business, and otherwise accomplishing myself, Mat. xxii. 3. Heb x. 25. Isa. lxxv. 2. Hos. viii. 12. time was miserably mispent. (2.) There was much omission of private duties, of prayer, meditation, and reading

reading of the scriptures ; and these were either omitted, or very slightly performed. (3.) I lived in spiritual adulteries, and gave myself to idols, to sensuality of meats, drinks, company, pastime, cards and dice ; and, *having forsaken God the fountain of living waters, I hewed out to myself broken cisterns that can hold no water :* and in this life of pleasures I continued, notwithstanding of many challenges of conscience. (4.) I through this decayed in grace, lost my assurance, peace and strength, and became very unheartly and indisposed. (5.) Playing excessively at the unlawful game of cards, spending much of the day and night therein, and in reading of romances, notwithstanding of challenges. (6.) There was extraordinary lightness in my conversation, especially with professors, when the sad times called for mourning. The work of reformation was at this time ruined ; the eminent servants of Christ, some killed, some banished, their livelihood taken from them, and all generally discountenanced ; wickedness advanced, and godliness born down ; faithful ministers cast from their charges, and hirelings introduced, because they would not submit to the accursed prelacy : and yet was I making mirth when mine eyes were witnesses to all this. My outward temptations to this were abundant divertisements, carnal company and a spirit of sloth.

4. Yet notwithstanding some life continued still, and the burning bush was not consumed. The means that did me good were. 1. I would pray once a day, at least in the morning ; and this kept me from putrifying altogether. 2. Writing some practical divinity did me good, and put me likewise in a frame. 3. On the sabbath day I would take some more time, and the Lord would *ordinarily meet me with some life and affections ;*

and then I would see the evil of my ways, and return. 4. Extraordinary times for meditation I would take; and, when sin and distance would come to some height, I would retire and pour out my soul to God, and by this means get good, and I would put on new resolutions. 5. Afflictions now begun likewise to work, and these kept my eyes waking, and would make an impression upon my spirit, and put me out to prayer, and would make mercies, whether spiritual or temporal, sweet to me. 6. Some seasonable words I would hear sometimes in good books or sermons or discourses, which did keep my bones green as it were, and would keep in my dying life; and thro' this it came to pass, that tho' I was much endangered by temptations, yet not altogether destroy'd.

5. God's end in this, for any thing I yet understand, was to let me see the evil of the good of the world: for now, having health, peace, liberty, company, diversifements and money, I became carnal, that so I might see the evils of the world to be better than the good thereof. 2dly, 'That the remembrance of this mispent time might humble me afterwards, that in the sense of this I might walk softly and in bitterness, Hos. ix. 1. Isa, xxxviii. 15. 3dly. That thereby I might be the better assured of the Lord's everlasting love, who now, when afresh provoked, did not forsake me, but after all this returns: as, 1st, What a mercy, that I was not taken away in my sins! if God should then have summoned me, how unprepared had I been, and what a terror would death then have been unto me? Ezek. xx 8. 2dly, In keeping in the dying and consuming life, that I fell not back altogether, and slept not the *sleep of death*, Exod. iii. 2. 3dly, In his pains and visitations, whereby my spirit was upholden:

Oh

Oh how did he warn me ! how did he preserve my soul from falling, and dried mine eyes from tears ! one time, despairing almost of doing any good I was recovered and strengthened by that word, Deut. viii. 15, 16. *I led thee through a great and terrible wilderness, that I might do thee good in the latter end.* Another time a graceless minister, of whom I expected nothing, did revive my spirit against the fears of wants in the world, in a sermon on these words, *fear not, the hairs of your head are all numbered ;* and spake most pertinently to the case. 4thly, At last he delivered me. And will not this God, that hath accompanied me so far, carry me to the end ?

6. From which I observe, 1st, The great wickedness and power of sin that is in every man's heart, that, notwithstanding of all means, will still be breaking out again and again O how great need of great watchfulness is there, and spiritual dependence on God ! 2dly, God's own people, to whom he shews kindness, are not exempted from the greatest of evils, such as sins, temptations, desertions, decays and afflictions ; which should make us walk in fear and trembling, 2 Chron. xxxii 26. 3dly, All the Lord's ways are mercy and truth to them that fear him ; he brings good out of all evils ; where sin abounds, grace superabounds. I trust this shall do me good, and make me *love much, because much is forgiven*, Psal xxv. 20. 4thly, Prosperity, ease, and the desires of the soul, send leanness to the soul ; the evils of the world are much better than the good thereof, Prov. i. 32. 'tis still better with me when I have least outward comforts. 5thly, Whatever God suffers in others for a time, or whatever their own thoughts may be, yet will *not God suffer sin unpunished or uncorrected in professors,*

unsettledness and low condition. At that time I gave up myself to God, to be directed by him, and he led me by an unexpected way, which was, by convincing me of my unbelief, and humbling me under it, and drawing me by renewed acts of faith to himself again. The Lord made the strain of my discourse to run out on faith, and unbelief, which last I considered as the greatest of evils. The considerations that then had influence upon me were, 1st, Unbelief was the only and great sin of the Israelites in the wilderness, for which the Lord was so angry, that he *consumed their days in vanity*, Psal. lxxviii. 32, 33. because they did not trust in him, nor believed him for all his wonders. 2dly, Unbelief reflects on God, and says as much as, He is a liar, 1 John v. 10. An opinion of God's infidelity and treachery is the foundation of unbelief, as his truth is the ground of faith. 3dly, Unbelief is the mother and womb of all the departings and apostasies of the soul from God, Heb. iii. 12. Unbelief is the captain that strikes the first stroke, and leads all the armies of spiritual evils against us. 4thly, Unbelief is more hainous than the sin of Sodom, Mat. xi. 24. more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for unbelieving Capernaum. 5thly, Unbelievers are amongst the first and chief that shall be sent to the bottomless pit, Rev. xxi. 8. *The fearful and unbelievers, &c.* 6thly, The Holy Ghost, when he comes to convince of sin, convinces of this most; John xvi. 9. *When he comes, he will convince of unbelief;* as tho' there were no sin but this, or in comparison of this. 7thly, Unbelief is a sin against love and kindness, and the refusing of the offers of love; and this wounds the Lord most. Any thing but unkindness, Acts xiii. 41. therefore, *Ye despisers, wender and perish.* 8thly, Unbelief is a sin against
the

person of Christ; *They would have none of me.* y, Unbelief is a sin that makes the Lord lose his pains and travail. If a physician would have e to a far country, and with great pains have ight a precious potion that only could heal his ent's disease; if now the patient after all this k should spill it, or break the vessel in ch it were, would not this go very far to the sician's heart? So it is here; the Lord Jesus a come from the bosom of the Father, taught uch, suffered so much, waited so long on thee, ered so much of thee, humbled thee, taken all pains imaginable on thee, and all to make e believe, and which is only able to do thee d; and wilt thou after all this refuse the po- ? 1othly, Unbelief is a dangerous and strong , that walks up and down the soul under the ion of humility, and can be hardly gotten a- . With these considerations which God did fs home on my soul, through his goodness and ver, I was wrought on so powerfully and sweet- o believe the sinfulness of unbelief, and evil reof; and the Lord commended faith so to me, t I found I was drawn to Christ by an irrefi- le yet suitable power, and yet so strongly, that ould not misbelieve, and was made to resolve l promise never more to misbelieve. I was pas- ; and found a divine power in it. 2. From ; there proceeded a new heart, resolutions and ngth. 3. All sorrows and fears were remov- and I was much comforted, quieted and ngthened. 4. Strengthened to seek the Lord l his ways. 5. Sin in general mortified, and a ticular sin, *viz* playing at cards, quite felled, h which I had so long wrestled in vain, and to ich I had so great an inclination that I conti- ed in it against checks of conscience: that sin,

I say, this day received its death's wound ; so as I put on a thorough resolution never to use any of these games and lottery, and this so effectually, that from that day to this day I never had so much as an inclination to it, which before I could hardly forbear ; which gave me great peace afterwards.

2. Nor were the immediate effects of this, while at home, less blessed : For, 1. I found a greater wisdom, strength and activity to go about civil business, which I could master now. 2. I had some experience of the Lord's kindness in some afflictions and trials I met with at the same time, in supporting my spirit under them, and delivering my soul out of them wonderfully by his own immediate power ; which if God had not done, any of them might do much to break me : these did not in the least dismay me. 3. I found afflictions doing me good ; and the rod was giving me instruction, and putting me to prayer, in an extraordinary manner : my heart likewise was mortified to the world, and God was made sweet to me as my portion. 4. I got some knowledge in the covenant of grace, the grounds of believing, the advantages thereof, and motives to it : with this my spirit was most exercised ; and, being called to another country, I express much cheerfulness in my life and spiritual strength in the Lord, crying out against discouragements and unbelief, and pressing faith, and shewing the grounds thereof : for I found the professors thereof to be altogether discouraged with unbelief and a spirit of bondage ; for application of promises was counted presumption, and I cannot deny but I was someway useful to some of them. And their great unbelief and slavish spirit did make me think that e'er long they would fall though they were eminent ; and soon it fell out. 5. I began again

to write diaries, and to walk more closely and circumspectly with God. 6. Being very dead afterwards, I went under great indisposition to prayer at night ; and I, through the Lord's providence, was put to meditate on the Lord's way of doing me good, and the communion I had with him at my first acquaintance : the Lord so blessed these thoughts, that they strangely revived and stirred me up to a more vigorous following of God, which continued and increased for much of a quarter of a year, in which time I was fully growing. 7. The Lord did put me now to meditate on more substantial truths than formerly, *viz.* the evil of sin, God's attributes, death, hell and heaven ; of indispositions, which did me much good. 8. The buds of true sincerity, and purity of ends and actions, were now appearing ; and I then began first to think, that possibly I was converted. 9. The scriptures were exceeding sweet to me, and I began to see and feel more light and power and wisdom in them than ever before, especially the epistle to the Romans ; which did much stablish me in believing. Gifts increased, so was the outward conversation reformed. 10. Several practical and speculative discourses which I did write, especially on afflictions, did me good : solitude, prayer, doing good to others, and strictness in walking, did me much good ; so did my meditations on sin, on the attributes of God, on afflictions likewise.

3. Although there was enmity between me and my lusts, yet not being thoroughly mortified, and they getting leave, did make me unstable in my ways ; so that, like the sluggard, *I reaped not what I took in hunting* : And beginnig to succeed in some affairs, and carrying business, and growing in some estimation with others, my heart not well

M

balanced

balanced was lifted up, and I was projecting great things to myself, and dealing imperiously with some under my power. Likewise some of my carnal relations at the same time, being men of account, coming out of the south, and having ado with them, I but too much sought to humour them, and to comply with their fashions and sinful customs of healthing, which did much untune me and wear away some of the former impressions.

4. From all which I observe and learn these things ; 1st, That faith is the life of a christian, and the main grace, Isa. lv. 3. Hab. ii. 4. Rom. i. 17. Heb. x. 38. Gal. ii. 20. 2dly, That faith is wrought by the power of God, in which the soul is passive, though faith itself be an act of the soul; for I was overpowered in believing, and drawn to God. 3dly, That faith hath a great influence on sanctification ; so that one main reason of so little power against sin, so little holiness in life and conversation, is the want of the exercise of faith, and through a spirit of bondage, 1 Pet. i. 5. Mark ix. 19, 23. Heb. xi. 33. By faith righteousness is wrought, and all apostasy proceeds from a decay of faith. 4thly, Where Christ hath begun a good work, he will continue still to perfect it, Phil. i. 6. 5thly, Faith and every other grace is at first but very imperfect, Mat. xiii. 31. *like a grain of mustard-seed.* 6thly, God doth not always deliver in that way and manner that is thought or designed by the poor soul itself, but in an unexpected and oftentimes contrary way: for I designed a fast to see if the Lord would break in with terror upon my soul, and that was the way by which I thought to return out of my backsliding ; and, behold, the Lord helped, by pressing and helping to believe, 2 Kings v. 11. Prov. iii. 5. Isa. lv. 8. 7thly, Faith is the first grace

ercise, prior in time to any other, John vi. er. xxxi. 19. *After I was turned I smote my thigh.* And he that would do any thing, must fix his faith first; for whatever is not in faith is sin. 8thly, As faith and other graces have their flowings, so have they and will their ebbings; they have their winters and summers, none must expect constant and uninterrupted growth; they have their witherings, dependence and fresh application may be made to Christ, and that Christ for a renewed life put a renewed obligation on the soul, Isa. li. 24. Psal. cii. 26. 1-Pet. i. 25. let none expect constant health. It is said of the heavens, *they shall change them, and they shall be changed.* Days and times set apart extraordinarily, on some extraordinary occasions, are exceeding precious and profitable (if not needful) to the preservation of a christian life; nor know I how folks can be christians without it: There were occasional sacrifices as well as the daily burnt-offering, and sometimes extraordinarily for extraordinary occasions: it is true, they are not stinted now under the gospel, nor holy by précept as they were; there is this moral in them, that yet obliges, extraordinary mercies or troubles should be answered by proportional extraordinary worship and adoration to God. For my own part, I cannot express how needful, yea, how, profitable and necessary these days have been; what others may know not: and I look on the neglect of extraordinary address to God, as one main cause why there are so many decayed, and are but high-christians.

SECT. IV.

Of some after troubles and decays that befel me, and recoveries thereof, 1663.

1. **B**EING delivered now from all my fears, and my day clearing as to my spiritual condition, and better hopes of temporal affairs, I was anew plunged in a sea of troubles, when I did scarce dream of it : for falling out with some of my relations unadvisedly, and egged on by others, went some civil matters ; I pursued them at law, and spent more on it than the matter was worth, and that merely on the account of my credit and reputation : where there wanted not diligence and success as to my part, but God put visible hinderances in the way, and I was led merely by my inclinations, and did not advise with the Lord. 2dly, At first, thro' want of occasions to pray, and manifold temptations, and want of good company, and much distracted with what I intended, and quartering in a change-house ; I fell in some considerable decay, and began to be remiss in my progress, and to grow dead and dull, and untender, and the Lord's communications did dry up upon my soul ; and now I began to forget former things : and this continued July and August. 3dly, I changed my quarters in town, being unsatisfied with my former, and the inconvenience thereof ; and took up my chamber in a godly man's house, an outed minister, where, thro' his godly conversation, and some more pains taken in duties, and his godly spiritual sermons on the sabbath-day, and my withdrawing from hearing curates, but especially thro' the Lord's pouring out of his spirit, and drawing near to my
Soul.

soul, I began again to recover ; and in process of time not only recovered what I lost, but much more : the unregarded vineyard was now looked to again, and communion with God set on foot, and my taste of spiritual truths returned again. Here I stayed till the middle of October. 4thly, One sabbath-day especially, when alone, and at first perceiving nothing, and under great deadness, and upon the point of giving over, the Lord was pleased unexpectedly to draw near, and to concur so with my exercises, as that thro' the light of his spirit I was made to see much of my good estate, and to behold the work of God in my soul ; to discover the many mistakes I had, that before kept me in darkness and bondage ; thro' which I was so enlightned and strengthened that it was as a recovery of health after sickness, and like the sun getting out from under the cloud ; in the strength of which I went afterwards, and by this day's exercise did much advance in my journey : and the truths of the Lord, then taught me, were of special use ever afterwards to me. 5thly, I here likewise got some extraordinary visits from the Lord both in prayer and other exercises, especially in reading of the scriptures : but it was prest on my spirit, and I was followed with it, *that bonds and afflictions were abiding me ;* which accordingly fell out. 6thly, I succeeded as to my business for which I came south, having got the law with much pains and expences against these who did compete with me, they not striving much against it, but going another way to work. 7thly, Here likewise, taking but too great a liberty to converse with quakers, I was, thro' some of their insinuations and reading of their books, tempted to join with them ; and a great stir upon my spirit : but going to pray to God, and recom-

mending my staggering spirit to him, the Lord made such a light to shine in my soul from his word, that did let me see the utter evil of their way, and how cross it was to God's will, the danger and inconsistency of it with salvation, so as I was made to look on them as the greatest enemies to Christ of any he had, and the effects of the wrath of God to punish such as had not received the truth in Love. This was a week's exercise to me: the means were prayer, submission, seasonably suggested scriptures, and some meditation on their way; but that which did most alienate me from them, was, I saw them more zealous for spreading their opinion, than drawing to Christ; I saw or heard little of his praises in their mouths; the end of their conversation was not Christ. 2dly, I thought on the main controverted principles, and clearly saw them of the devil: I looked on the inward testimony and guiding of the spirit (as they say) in the heart, but as a device of Satan to cast off the scriptures, that he deluding their spirits, and they giving way to their own corrupt imaginations, might close with any evil he should suggest; and besides, I saw it flat contrary to the scriptures, by which Christ was led, and which were given that we might believe and learn to fear God. 3dly, They denied the sovereignty of God, in maintaining free-will, and all in man's power; which I saw manifestly cross to the scriptures. 4thly, I saw clearly that they walked in a covenant of works: for their way of justification and happiness was only taking heed to the light within, and obeying it, and by so doing to come to eternal life; and this I could never digest. 5thly, I looked on their casting aside a standing ministry and ordinances, and not praying but when the spirit moveth, as so many bellish

hellish inventions of Satan, and great presumptuous arrogancy, and the effects of a slothful spirit ; and the design of all to draw from the simplicity of the gospel. 6thly. I saw they walked by sense and feeling, and not by faith. 7thly, I saw and considered that these that they made their prey were ordinarily but only old jaded professors, that never found the constant satisfying sweetness of their own religion, and in time wearying of it, and not able to resist the strong temptations of spiritual enemies, and in a word wanting rest in Christ because never truly united to him, have in time withered, and, like the unclean spirit, seeking rest and finding none, have here at last stumbled : nor have I ever been stumbled at any who fell that way, being known to have sense predominant in them, that in time would lead them to it. In a word, I never knew any extraordinary tender walker, and knowing, continuing so, that stumbled in this ; and this delusion seemed to me to be a particular judgement on adulterous professors, whereas the gospel takes and apprehends all sorts. 8thly, I considered, that if there was any thing commendable in them, such as their unwillingness to pray rashly, but in the spirit, their waiting and close attending on the spirit, their mortification to the world, their self-denial, their sobriety and temperance in all things. their freedom in reproving all sorts, and their diligence in exhorting all ; I say, if there was any thing like this commendable in them, our own principles did lead us to these things however we generally in our practice come short ; and I looked on this foolish people as stirred up of God to upbraid his own people, and to teach them these things which they so much press : these things, *with their personal infirmities and weakness which*

I observed, with other reasons which I now remember not, thro' the Lord's blessing had such influence as made me utterly abhor them, the Lord in all this instructing me with a strong hand.

2. During this time likewise I began to forsake the prelates and curates, and did forbear to hear them. The steps by which I went were, 1. For a long time I heard without any scruple, but never could I get any good, and I found the outward ordinances do me less good than formerly; yea, when privately, I got good; nor could I after examination find any cause in me of this. 2. The curates preaching did me ill at last, inasmuch that, when I would come to sermon in any frame, I would come from it dead and heartless; and, when I went indisposed, I would be far worse. Thus I continued for a long time; and many times I observed this; but could not imagine the cause: yet at length I was suspicious that this might be the cause, especially when withdrawing became a doubtful case in the kingdom; which began to be about the time that there was an act made against it. 3. Suspecting the matter, I began to examine it; and at first view my affections began to be engaged for the negative, yet yet my judgement was determined: and, by looking to it, I found the weakness of the chief grounds for hearing, by considering that the naked act of preaching was not an ordinance of God (otherwise women, madmen, children, yea, and devils could preach) unless by men sent: I saw likewise, that the church could not make choice of them whom God had in his word discharged: I saw likewise, that we might separate from these that were never excommunicate: I was convinced likewise, that the true visible church did not stand so much

much in the multitude, as in the serious professors of the truths of God; and that these few, continuing faithful, were rather to be followed than the multitude. Having laid these principles, a door was open. 4. I went a good while contrary to my inclinations; and one day, going, I was compelled to return back again, and durst not for terror go forewards: upon which I prayed to God, that if he were displeased with my going, that he would give me some sign thereof, and that he might be pleased to bless my private exercises; which the Lord did, so as, in one afternoon while private, I gained more life and knowledge of God than I did a whole year before; by which I was much confirmed. 5. About the same time many providential considerations had influence with me; the universality of the godly and tenderest leaving them daily; the extraordinary influence of God's spirit on myself and others when separate from them; some sad consequences following such as did hear them; as likewise, I heard and knew of some under exercise for hearing of them, which much confirmed me, and made me think that God did own us in not hearing. I found that made out to me, *be ye separate, and I will be a father to you.* 6. By searching into the matter as a case of consequence, I found positive grounds for judging withdrawing from them a reasonable duty; as the frequent commands of God, *to separate from, to let alone, and beware of, and flee from corrupt guides,* John x. 5. Mat. xv. 14. I thought the consequence of hearing to be a hardening and strengthening of them in their courses, and a destruction to the work of God: I looked on it as against nature, to join and keep fellowship with such rebels, that were so signally and avowedly against the Lord in arms; and I thought

thought love to God compelled me to leave
I likewise looked on hearing of them (as
an act of worship) an owning of the auth-
orities: *for he that receiveth you, receiveth
me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that,*
For obedience to officers, when it is active
acknowledgement of their authority: I could
I was otherwise bound by the covenant.
lastly, I judged my respect to the poor people
God, and who were generally injured for
cause, should make me run in to them, at
the same lot with them in life or death, especially
seeing they suffered upon that account.
Being to die, there was nothing that in
science got such an approbation from God,
separation from them. And, 8. To confirm
I besought God by fasting, on a day of
fasting set apart on purpose for this effect, be-
sought God to reveal his mind unto me in this
the result of which was, that there were
grounds given me of separation from them,
my former grounds confirmed; so that I
continued in a separation from them to this day.
Thus was I drawn from curates, and by
means, being now six years almost since
left them.

3. And now; being a little strengthened
looking for good days, a cloud came and
removed me from the place.

gain by it ; as likewise all my preparations
 some debtors were made void, and I look'd
 at that time no less than the loss of 20000 l.
 through my absence from the north, and
 of advertisement south, 800 merks *per annum*,
 were comprised formerly, and now reco-
 by the creditors; which afterwards I strove
 der all I could, and to regain, but all in
 nd to no purpose but laying out of needles
 ces ; so as I behoved to live on my mother's
 y, and had not wherewith to spend or do
 fs. 3. And to help this, other 200 merks
num were evicted from me about the same
 through want of money to defend it, and
 curities. 4. Nor was this enough : after I
 home I could not get rest nor freedom to
 myself, but was charged before two courts
 : time, most violently, for no less than 12000
 : alledged due by my father, and a wrongous
 on ; which kept me continually travelling,
 ut me to great charges to maintain these two
 s, being likewise at the same time charged
 . 5. There were likewise some small debts
 I was owing here and there, extending in
 1000 l. for which I was daily haraffed by se-
 persons ; so that south, north, east and west,
 ld not turn me where I had not a creditor :
 I confess troubled me more than all the
 as having my credit engaged therein ; and
 which I had ordered to pay them was taken
 nor knew I what to do. One mercy I had,
 ealth was continued. 6. Nothing now re-
 ed of all my father's great fortune but a small
 et of sixteen chalders, liferented likewise by
 other : and about the same time a new (tho'
 ijust) adversary charges both her and me for
 o merks, and a reduction of our rights ; so
 that

that our whole livelyhood was either gone, or at the stake : for four years did this adversary vex us, and was like to have undone us as to our temporal condition, had not the Lord prevented. 7. To this was added contempt and reproach ; I was the table-talk of the times then ; *Behold a man smitten of God.* I was a sign and wonder ; the people of God were grieved ; my nearest and surest friends forsook and looked strange on me, of whose kindness now I had proof, and whom of purpose I tried, tho' I knew they would not help me ; I was as a burdento them, and by them despised : and whoever had any thing to say, did now strike in against me ; my enemies rejoiced, and myself at first was fore sunken. 8. And ; to compleat all, there was no returning to him that smote me, and my strokes fell'd me, and at first I decayed in my spiritual condition : and thus was my spiritual condition from October to January 1665 ; all things were low both spiritually and temporally.

4. The causes of these my troubles were either outward, or from myself. The outward causes were, my authors bad securitics in their heritage, which were questioned in my time. 2. My father's cautionary for others, which hath been 48000 merks out of my way. 3. His dying so soon, and leaving me so young. 4. The unskillfulness and negligence of those whom he intrusted with the management thereof ; for nothing was looked to after he was gone, and all was destroyed e'er I was twenty years of age. 5. Evil friends, some slighting us and denying us help ; others, out of envy to my father, employing all their power to harm us, which succeeded. 6 Evil times, so as I durst scarce appear to do any thing, those whom I had to do with being in court, and I being hated
for

or my principles ; and all things went by moiety and bribing, so as I was forced to agree with them on the terms they pleased. *Secondly*, The cause inward from myself was sin ; as, 1. I suppose my relations had influence on this storm ; for I found great freedom in confessing them. 2. We were a professing family, and did not walk suitable thereunto, but like the world. 3. My carnality, and desires to be great with men ; and my too much esteem, prizing and desiring of outward greatness and comforts. 4. Faithfulness in dealing with others, seeking by law-tricks to secure our interests, and dissimulation in bargaining. 5. Not acknowledging of God in all our ways, but doing all things without his advice, and running to this or the other outward help. 6. Pride and stoutness of heart, which God hath been crushing. 7. Breach of vows and engagements, especially of dedicating myself to the service of God in the ministry. 8. Incurribleness under ordinances, convictions and lesser judgments ; therefore did the Lord take the rod, Exod. xx. 5. Job v. 4, 5. (2.) Amos iii. 2. Ezek. xxxvi. 20. (3.) Isa. lvii. 17. Jer. vi. 12, 13. (4.) Jer. vi. 13. (5.) Hos. viii. 3, 4. Isa. xxxi. 1. (6.) James iv. 6. Isa. xxviii. 1. (7.) Eccl. v. 4, 5. (8.) Amos iv. 6. Isa. vi. 9, 11.

Thirdly, The Lord's ends were, as I suppose, 1st, To reform and heal me, Isa. xxvii. 9. 2dly To humble my heart, and break it ; to break the pride, stoutness, hardness and lightness thereof, Deut. viii. 2. 3dly, To deaden me to the world, and to friends and relations ; and therefore made me find such bitterness, vexation, vanity and disappointments from it : No friend or relation ever had, but failed and disobliged me, Hos. ii. 6, 7. Mica ii. 10 4thly, To give me experience of his love in delivering me out of all these troubles, and

supporting me under them, Rom. v. 3, 4, 5. to do me good in my latter end, Deut. viii. 15, 16. to prepare me for this. 5thly, That I might be fitted and enabled to direct and comfort others in their afflictions, 2 Cor. i. 4. 6thly, To draw me to himself, and seek him more earnestly, Isa. xxvi. 8. 7thly, To keep me from rotting and dying, and to hold me waking; therefore hath he been constantly exercising me, Isa. xxxviii. 16. *By these things shall men live.* 8thly, To learn, exercise and increase faith and patience, James i. 2, 3. 9thly, To keep me with himself in these times, and to preserve me from the snares of an evil time, which now I find rich men exposed unto. And indeed I found much good by all these dispensations; for by the sadness of the countenance I find my heart bettered and mortified to the world, and I drawn nearer to God, and kept waking, and have experience of the Lord's goodness; so that I may say, *it is good for me that I have been afflicted.* One thing I am sure of, I would never have kythed so much for him as I do now. In a word, the Lord hath so blessed his rod to me, as I find all these ends and fruits of righteousness wrought in me, so as I may say, I had perisht unless I had perisht, (*perissem nisi perissem.*) The world and the prosperity of fools hath destroyed many; they have no changes, and therefore fear not God; and they are settled on their lees. Blessed be the Lord for inward and outward exercises and troubles.

5. I learn and observe these things; (1.) Outward prosperity puffs up the heart, Deut. xxxii. 15. (2.) As a man thrives in the world, so hath he friends in the world; I found their kindness ebb and flow as my fortune did, Lam. i. 8. Ezek. xvi. 37. (3.) When God afflicts, it is in earnest, and not in jest, Ezek. ii. 4, 5. 1 Sam. iii.

iii. 12. Jer. iv. 12. a full wind ; and vi. 19. I felt this storm. (4.) There is need of great heaviness ; light strokes will not do the turn, and therefore the furnace is made the hotter. (5.) It is the ordinary lot of God's people, and they must lay their account with it, to find trouble in and from the world, John xvi. ult. *thro' much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God.* (6.) All inventions and means are in vain to deliver out of trouble, till the acceptable year come : *in vain shalt thou use many medicines.* All means were broken. (7.) The storms of God's people may last long, so as they may be put to cry, *how long ?* and their whole years spent in sighing, Psal. xiii. 1. (8.) The want of the company of God's people is a great evil, and a great step to defection ; I found the loss of it. Eccl. iv. 10, *wo to him that is alone.* (9.) Their company is a great mercy, and a blessed mean to beget life, 1 Pet. iii. 1. to maintain it, and recover life, Eccl. iv. 9, 10, 11, 12. Thro' good company I recovered again. (10.) No greater curse than for a man to get his will in the world. I ever got a wound when I had the desires of my heart ; then leanness was sent to my soul. (11.) Whatever the Lord lets go with his people, yet will he not let pride go with them. I was seeking to be great in the world, James iv. 6. 2 Chron. xxxii. 25. (12.) Ordinarily men at first get no good by afflictions, but are rather worse, and are felled under them, Hos. ii. 6, 7. Isa. lvii. 17. (13.) The crosses of the people of God are still and ever sanctified unto them really, *for it shall accomplish that whereunto it is sent ;* and therefore they are blessed things. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.* Heb. xii. 11. (14.) The good is not presently seen, tho' it be, but there is much corruption seen : God doth good, tho' we see it not. *They knew not that I healed them,*

Hcf. xi. 3. *in the latter end you shall consider it.* (15.) God shews much mercy in affliction; he lays it not on till they be able to bear it, and he *says his rough wind in the day of his east wind.* The Lord gave some mitigation and a breathing time, and strengthened the soul, and by his visitations upheld it, Psal. cxxxviii. 3. lest they should be swallowed up of grief and sorrow. (16.) As the people of God are graciously exercised, under trouble, so doth there much ill blood come out too. I dare not say but grace was exercised, but oh how much corruption was there! how much fainting, murmuring, unbelief, and seeking to carnal means was there! and how slowly did my dross go away! (17.) The beginning of a christian warfare and life is the hardest; and the entry is straitest: *the latter end is peace; to do the good in thy latter end.* (18.) Sin and afflictions do ordinarily try together, and sin is the sting of crosses; *the sting of death is sin.* A proud, murmuring, sinful heart makes weights and burdens painful. (19.) God's love is more seen in comforting and strengthening under trouble, than in delivering from it, Luke xii. 32. (20.) God is the only comforter of his people under afflictions: *in thee the fatherless findeth mercy; in me ye shall have peace.*

SECT. V.

Of my recovery out of decays and afflictions:

1. **B**EING in this forsaken and desolate case, and none to pity, it pleased the Lord to look upon me, and to give my soul a resting place, when forsaken of all others; he was the only friend in adversity. (1.) He strengthened my soul by comfortable words, allaying thereby the
extremity

extremity of my afflictions ; then did he say unto me, *why art thou disquieted ?* is there any thing out what is ordinary befallen thee ? are there not many thousands that would change conditions with thee ? all this is but bairns-play to what others have suffered : is it not good that thou art thus afflicted ? thou hast much of Christ's compassion, and pity, and tendernefs ; it may be he will do thee good for this : it is good that this is the vengeance he takes for all thou hast done ; *chastned of the Lord, that thou mayst not be condemned with the world.* Poor soul, what hast thou lost ? thy loss hath been only the things of the world, in which no part of thy happiness doth consist : art thou not in thy father's hand ? and wilt not thy tutor order all things well ? men and devils can do no more than he prescribes ; and dost thou fear evil from that airth ? and shouldst thou not bear all that comes from him ? but consider further, wouldst thou yet exchange states with the mad world ? all thy adversaries, in all likelyhood, that are now making merry, are to burn in hell for ever ; is thy misery any thing to these ? wait therefore upon God : a little time will blow over this storm ; it is so violent, that it cannot last long. And tho' thy case be very sad, yet is it not beyond the reach of God's power ; yea, for all this thou shalt bless the day that ever thou wast afflicted : afflictions are good things, else had they never been left in legacy by Christ, nor promised in the new covenant. With these and the like considerations was my soul several times, in my extremity, refresh'd and allayed. (2.) I would get much ease sometimes by pouring out of my soul to God in prayer, and shewing him my case ; which at first I could not win unto. (3.) I had general letters of loosing arrestments ; some persons were left out ; I was counselled, in respect it

was just, and did proceed upon an omission and sloth, to insert and interline the other persons, and to execute it particularly : to which I condescended at first, but afterwards I had scruples of it, imagining it to be illegal ; and tho' it was just, yet there should be so much respect to the law, as not to contravene it, or to lie on it. Being in this strait, and bound for two days space, I could get none prayed, the Lord thereby shewing himself displeased with such a procedure : I did all I could to clear my conscience, but the more was I bound and straitned ; and to satisfy my conscience my will could not condescend : thus was I racked betwixt conscience and interest, each of them imprisoning me. At last I prayed to the Lord, that with his power he would bow my will to his. The Lord heard, and convinced me of the sinfulness and inconveniency of the thing, and of my duty. Well then, quoth I, as delivered from a prison, tho' I should lose 10000 merks by it, I will not displease the Lord's deputy ; let me have war with all but peace with God, let the hazard and prejudice be what it can ; and thereupon immediately and fully resolved to forgo my interest, and leave the Lord to recompense me : which when I had once win unto, immediately there came a sweet calm into my soul, access to God, my mouth opened in prayer, my bonds loosed, my spirit comforted and strengthened, and an extraordinary sweetness found in complying with the Lord's will ; and at the same time strengthened to bear all my burdens, and cheerfully to undergo them ; got light what to do, so as the next day I execute what I resolved ; my friends in the mean time chiding with me, and thinking me a gone man, that stood on such a scruple. (4.) Quickly did the Lord reward me even outwardly :

ardly : for my adversary that had charged me
 r a spulzie, and had it to his probation before
 the sheriff-court, insisting violently; and I, igno-
 ant what defences to make, had in my company
 a regisstrate hornings, which I accidentally and
 without premeditation (God putting it in my mind
 at the same time) did cast in, by which he, being
 the king's rebel, was incapacitate from pursuing
 me : and the Lord so ordered it, that he never
 after compeared to trouble me, by which means
 I was delivered from a loss and a fastery, and had
 not one court to wait upon. (5.) Being pursued
 before the commissar-court likewise for 9000
 merks resting by my father, the Lord in that
 showed me kindness, notwithstanding of the
 greatness of the sum, the power, knowledge, in-
 fluence and activity of my adversary; and not-
 withstanding his process was very well fixed, and
 that I wanted money, and none to lend me from
 whom I was wont to borrow, and had no skill in
 law-matters then (I was then like the setting sun
 in my declining days, and looked on as a despised
 ranch, withered; that would never grow again;
 and that every one thought the decreet should be
 quickly pronounced against me, yea, and myself
 every day in daily expectations thereof.) Yet it
 pleased God to stir up a stranger to lend me mo-
 ney; to provide unexpected defences in some
 books of law, wherein my case would at first start
 up, and there-from be provided with what to say
 in law against the next day. The time for a
 whole half-year, in which ordinarily every week
 there was a compearance, was protracted; and
 then at last I was adjudged to swear or otherwise
 be decerned, and I refusing lest I should offend
 others, tho' I was clear in the matter; the very
 day in which sentence was to be pronounced a-
 gainst

gainst me, by threatening the judges with casting in a horning against them, I got them from that day to delay it: which horning I came very accidentally by, and so not only got it delayed, but my adversary wearied with such delays; and his commission at the same time taken away, he gave over the pursuit, and never further troubled me till this day; and I got, partly by reading; and partly by pleading, and hearing the form, a competent measure of knowledge in the law.

2. At the same time I was growing in my spiritual condition, recovering out of my decay, and increasing in faith, in diligence and strength; likewise the evidence of regeneration in the day of examination was discovered, mistakes cleared, and buds of the new nature did appear above ground; the scriptures were very sweet, occasions of meeting with God seldom in vain; this I had to counterbalance my outward troubles; so that, as the Lord did bear down with one hand, he supported with the other. One time in E. I was strongly enlightened in the mystery of the trinity; another night I was so taken up with the thoughts of the love of Christ, and refreshed, that I awaked the whole winter-night, admiring Christ, and praying with suitable affection; and at other times would spend two or three hours in prayer: likewise at the same time, writing on the scriptures, I received much light, clearness and sweetness: (we were then living in a burrows-town.) Several extraordinary visits would the Lord bestow on me, remembering my afflictions, by which I would oftentimes be carried above the world. I wrote at this time a compleat treatise of afflictions, and of conversion; as likewise finished a treatise concerning the scriptures almost, and wrote several things on the attributes of God and
some

some other miscellanies, in which I was extraordinarily assisted, and with which I was very much benefited; and altho' there was but one professor in the town, and he clothed with many weaknesses, yet did I find great advantage in his company, in praying together and conferring. I likewise remember this, that the Lord would be very kind to me (whilst others were at sermon on the Lord's day) in private, and when others would revile me, and look down upon me, and taunt me, and vex me; so as, when friends looked a-ooof, the Lord would draw near; insomuch that I knew not when I profited more than now.

3. When we came home again, the Lord was no less kind to me, yea, exceeded; and I was daily admitted to nearer and nearer fellowship with himself: and, wherever I was, God was with me; and continued thus till October. 1. Writing several meditations did me much good, and speaking unto the family. 2. About this time did I begin to study faith, and the covenant of grace: and one time, from Rom. v. and from the consideration of baptism, was I mightily strengthened in assurance and confidence, and *the joy of the Lord* did I find to be my *strength*. 3. Another time, setting some time apart one afternoon for examining my condition, tho' at first I was very indisposed, yet the Lord so stined and countenanced me, as that evidences were very clear, and I found undoubted marks of sanctification; with which I was so enlightened and refreshed, that in the strength thereof I walked many days. 4. I discovered a marvelous and great depth in the covenant of grace; I was much enlightened and strengthened in the extent, freedom and excellency thereof; I saw it a very rational thing to believe: and, among other considerations that did much strengthen me, this was

was one, That God required no other thing than to be content ; so that, if I were content, I needed not doubt. And why do I mourn for want of Christ (said I) if I be not content ? And I thought and supposed, and put it home to my own soul, if Christ would come down from heaven, and draw up such a covenant, wherein himself and all things were promised, would I willingly subscribe this covenant ? The Lord one night began to apply this very strongly and clearly ; Why dost thou not this ? It was a *night to be much remembered* for ever. After going to bed, in August, the Lord did so clear the covenant of grace, and by his spirit made me (at first dull and weak) apply and consent, and feed upon these privileges as mine. Are all these things yours ? quoth the spirit ; why dost thou not feed upon them ? Why dost thou not *delight thyself in fatness* ? Thou complainest of the want of life, strength and comfort ; Why dost thou not come to the fire that thou mayst be warm ? Here's the Lord's security for what thou wants : If thou had thy friend's security for money, thou wouldst be glad ; and hast thou not the Lord's in thy Bible ? and may not heaven, Christ and holiness satisfy thee ? And with this there came such a mighty gale of the spirit, that took away all my confusions, that made my soul apply Christ and all his benefits, answered all my objections so fully and clearly, and made me strongly to apply the promises ; insomuch that I found Christ a sweet and satisfying thing ; I found his flesh *meat indeed*, and his blood *drink indeed* ; all fears were driven away ; the gospel-privileges appeared exceeding sweet, so as I spent the whole night in prayer, praising and rejoicing, wishing now for the morning, that I might do mightily for the Lord : my very body was weakened with the abundance

dance of the joy of faith, arising from a sense of an interest in God. I was likewise very evangelical in my actings, considering all actions as the Lord's service, and myself and all things the Lord's; walking in great peace, and glorifying God, endeavouring to encourage others. I now began to think how to lay a bar on the doors, to keep the Lord Jesus that he should not depart again: I thought the covenant of grace would be an everlasting foundation of peace; there was more sweetness in duties than ordinarily, and more strength to glorify him, and greater peace and serenity of mind, though my daily wanderings did continue, and I was not altogether fixed; a storm behoved to do that. Likewise at the same time I received much knowledge and comfort from Mr. Goodwin's works, especially in his *Growth in Grace*, which answered, as face doth to face, to the frame of my spirit. The Lord's dealings with me now I have written largely elsewhere in my daily diary.

4. Six days after this was Satan let loose, and he brangled all my evidences and comforts: the grounds were, because I found not after some time the comfortable and satisfying sense of these things remaining upon my spirit; and next, because it came not after deep humiliation and horrors; and lastly, Because many of my old sins continued, as likewise there were some apprehensions of wrath immediately darted upon my soul, which at first staggered me, and made me hang down the head as I used to do: but when I thought it is childish with the first view of things to be cast down, and to be over credulous, and led like a child by my blind apprehensions; What know I but Satan may have a hand in this? I will therefore try this, and look e'er I leap, and examine the matter e'er I conclude any thing, and so
resolved.

resolved to ding out the bottom of it ; and therefore I began to lay unto my soul, *Why art thou cast down ?* And, after enquiry, I found the cause of my trouble to be doubting under the apprehensions of unsoundness, and that there was never a real work wrought upon my spirit. I further examined what ground was for this, and what made this continual struggle in my spirit, Gen. xxv. 22. and after search I found it to be, because at first there was not a clear humbling work continuing 'till the glorious revelation of Jesus to the soul. I proceeded to try what strength or truth was in this, and I found a falsehood in the objection, and grounded upon a mere imagination and alledgence, seeing by search I found out a substantial work of humiliation and preparation, though it did not agree in all circumstances with that work which had been in others : I discovered this but darkly at first, but more clearly afterwards. I began to think why the Lord contended with me, and did seem to be angry : In prayer it was revealed to me, that I might stand in awe, and fear, and not to be so bold in sinning against him, and to count sin a weighty matter, Exod. xx. 20. I lastly began to think what should be my present carriage, and I thought three or four things were very clearly and sweetly recommended to me ; 1. Not to give over, or despair. 2. Not to murmur, fret or quarrel with God ; but by quiet submission to yield unto him, and keep silence before him. 3. Not to quit duty ; but ever in the use of means to wait on him. 4. To be watchful against sin, and not to make my breach greater than it was. Through this exercise, and solid conclusion laid, much of the venom of my exercise was taken away ; and Satan, finding me thus buckled, did leave me, and tempted no more. It ended, that, in reading a comfortable practical

practical book, the Lord touched my affections, and drew me to himself and comforted me, and by the shining of the light of his countenance on my soul all troubles vanished; and I was made at the same time to see, that I not only had grace, but there was sensible progress and growth in it.

5. There followed upon this a certain decay during the space of a year; this was about the end of 1664, and continued till the end of 1665, during which time I was usually, though not always at home. Now, this decay was but from that height of spiritual joy, evangelicalness in working, and degrees of communion with God; there were more temptations, less peace within, and less progress made in the ways of God; so as I was made to live upon my old stock. Attempts, when any were made, were frustrate; and things which formerly relished had now no savour at all: it came hereby to pass, that much dumpishness was upon my spirit, and duties had no effect, so that I accounted the year 1665 an unfortunate year: God had so long not looked upon me, that I thought I was clean forgotten: yet notwithstanding all this time there was diligence in duties, and some visits, quicknings and encouragements, and yet far below what I formerly received; visitations were neither so great, nor the impressions so lasting: the procuring causes of which were,

1. My going from home, where I had freedom from trouble, much company and comforts to take up my heart; as likewise my too great familiarity with a conformist, and delighting too much in his company, Prov. xiii. 20. whereby his company was cursed to me.
2. Sensuality when from home, and little minding of God.
3. There was much pride in despising of others, and thinking too much of myself and of my attainments, and

something of a supercilious carriage; the Lord bring me low. 4. Evil company and going to places where I had no call, did much prejudice. I was all this time wroth to get out of the pit, but was more engaged fighting with some horrors of darkness, & several things of faith, on obedience, on yoke, on diligence, on Christ and his taking pains on the family; there was not of the care of the world entrusted to me: my wife was encouraging of others.

6. But God, that loved me once, did continue to love me to the end, and after many dated me, so as I not only recovered my health, but set further forward than ever thus; 1. By opening the covenant of grace more clearly than ever; and how that Christ was the covenant of the people; and that all stood and fell in him; and that he only was the ground of their joy, hope and confidence: and that he was first in the obligation of the covenant of grace, and that there was no tie on the creature the same the creature had on God. At the same time, one time in private, the offer of grace was made appear so real, clear and full, and my duty of receiving so manifest, that I very sensibly and really accept thereof, & my thought was Christ dwelling in the heart by the Spirit. 2. At the same time I spoke in the family first eleven chapters to the Romans, as Paul's epistles through; by which I discovered new light of justification that I never perceived before, and of the law, and of the combat twixt the flesh and spirit. 3. I received strength from some private fasts I kept, number of three or four or five, never used in vain. 4. About the same time

month I had frequent occasion of converse with godly, able and exercised christians, some of them being in soul-trouble at the time ; by which many meetings were kept, and therein something of God, whereby I was much bettered : tho' in the mean time I found not the sensible effects of these occasions, yet did they me good insensibly. 5. I went to ——— being called thereunto, and helped with extraordinary prayer before, and there was assisted to encourage others and exhort, and was helped to shine in a gospel-conversation. And here I was counselled to set up one other sail ; for before I prayed but twice a day, I here resolved to set some time apart at mid-day for this effect ; and, obeying this, I found the effects to be wonderful. Here I began to learn patience, and the nature of repentance ; as likewise studied and exercised my former lessons of faith. 6. And there being a semi-conformist there who was a little tricky, had carried in reference to the publick times with a great deal of carnal wisdom, gravity and piety, and so in no little esteem, but then under a sad decay, which might easily be perceived by any discerning christian ; he pretended love for the people of God, but had secretly complied with the adversary, and besides did come to synods : I was of nature suspicious, and very easily found him out, and knowing he had conformed and juggled others, and finding him all out of order, the Lord did put it on me not to hear him. I first spoke to him privately, then before two friends, and at last with a great deal of reluctance I refused to hear him ; this was marked by others, and some esteem I had in the country, and did by these means break his esteem and credit in the country, so as, finding his estimation fallen while he kept the prelates courts, he was forced at last

to forsake them : and the Lord abundant-
warded this my witnessing for him ; for
the country, and coming home, the Lord
me so strongly to himself, as the neck of i-
fitions was broken, and I made to close fu-
heartily with Christ and his work, este-
only glorious, so as my heart was never in :
frame ; never more assurance and single
heart ; never more strength to do or for
God ; never more mortification to the wor-
sweetness in the ways of God ; and now
fully resolved, always, and in all places, to
for him. Thus was I in my height, in
time the mystery of the covenant of grace
faith was more and more revealed to me,
and elevated to an higher measure of con-
formity to God's will, my mistakes and objection
daily falling away as the scales from Paul
and the signs of sanctification were piece af-
ter piece appearing ; and I thought, that, ever since
the time I acted faith formerly, my day was clear
and the longer I travelled, I found the way
cheerfuler, and my light and glory increas-
ed. I did not see what it was in the former days and
wildernefs condition : all this time outward
trials and wants continued, tho' the burd-
en and weight and gnawings of this serpent were abate-
d ; only, God stayed his rough wind ; they were
not but did neither increase nor trouble.

7. I only observe, (1.) When all the
world forsakes, then the Lord takes up ; and the
time of loathing is his time of love : I four-
ter from him when forsaken of all. (2.)
him the fatherless findeth mercy. I had no
but him, Hos. xiv. 8. (3.) It is ordinar-
the members to be in distress when the
is unwell. Zion the mother was ill now,

great distress; and no wonder I should have conformity with her. *Visit me with the gladness of thy people.* (4.) God's way of manifesting his love in trouble, is rather by supporting and comforting under trouble, than in delivering out of it. (5.) Divine consolations and visitations are a sufficient support under, and delivery out of trouble; for, tho' outward wants continued, yet the evil and sting of them was by the Lord's kindness to my spirit perfectly removed, even as tho' I had not been afflicted. (6.) Piety hath the promises of his life and of that which is to come: for I find, that, as I turned to God, so he shewed mercy outwardly to me, I got deliverances in my extremity; and besides, adversaries, tho' they were ying upon me, yet did no evil. (7.) A christian life is not one constant course, but hath various changes in it, living and dying, rejoicing and sorrowing, growing and decaying. It is the wicked that have no changes, and therefore fear not God: and this is, that the manifold wisdom of God and the various graces of his people might appear, and to keep them unsettled here, that they might be in a constant watch. (8.) It is not a vain thing to seek the Lord; for I never found but some extraordinary thing when I sought him extraordinarily. (9.) A christian grows and decays as his faith grows and decays. (10.) Meditation, and study of the covenant of grace, the gospel, Christ, and faith, I found a most profitable and nightly sanctifying thing. (11.) To cast out with the world, and bear the reproach of Christ, is a mighty profitable thing; *he that shall so lose his life shall find it.* (12.) God is never kinder than when I am under great loads. This is the great advantage of an afflicted condition, that the Lord pities most, and shews most kindness then.

and the more of the world's consolations, there is the less of Christ's consolations; and therefore in this the evils of the world are prized above the good thereof. (13.) God first learns to bear trouble, then delivers out of trouble. God will ever keep his people, that they be not overwhelmed in trouble; and, when they can bear it, will at last shew his power and good-will in delivering them out of it: for, after all this, I was not only upholden, but likewise delivered from my considerable vexations. (14.) There is never perfection to a man; in his best, some sin, some want, some enemy is remaining, that will very quickly mingle itself in all the wines of the saints: perfection is only in heaven; here we should rejoice with trembling here is therefore perpetual sorrow and conflicting.

SECT. VI.

Of a third fiery trial I endured for ten weeks space, and how supported and delivered.

THERE was nothing I remember had ever such influence to settle me as this last storm, which continued very bitter, violent and sharp during the space of ten weeks, in which my spirit was the most seriously exercised of any time I know; of which I shall speak but briefly, seeing I have it largely set down elsewhere. It was soul-trouble and disquietment I was under, with apprehensions of wrath, and violent temptations of Satan.

1. The grounds and occasions whereof were,
1. Considering grace to be so excellent a thing, as it is called, the divine nature; I not seeing this
glory

glory so as to be amazed thereat, but on the contrary finding such wildness, I concluded I wanted it : where is the glory ? said I. Are these prayers, affections, duties and exercises, the divine nature ? 2. In examining my evidences, I found objections against them, and none could bear water, or could at that time give me powerful, comfortable, demonstrative evidence. 3. I was pressed to some difficult duties, much contrary to my inclinations ; which were, in a word, to take up arms against the world, and to reprove every man and woman, and be free with them against their estates, and to make this my trade of life ; and, because I could not comply with this, I apprehended I was not sincere, but in a natural condition, seeing I had not an universal respect to all God's commands. 4. There were some seeming grounds that might make me think I was unconverted : in a word, the ground of all my trouble was, I was afraid I was yet in a natural condition, and so lost in my sins ; and, if so, I knew not what course to take ; nor did I think it probable I should ever come out of it, if I were yet in it.

2. My frame and condition was, 1. The terribleness of a natural condition was represented to me to the life ; and no evil was so great as sin, especially a sinful nature : and, my evidences being blotted, it was so much the more terrible. 2. The Lord likewise as clothed with fury was represented to my soul. 3. The devil, getting leave, did most cruelly, tyrannically and furiously batter my soul with objections tending to discourage me, and to create evil thoughts of God in me, and to make me believe that all this while I was living in an unconverted condition and delusion. 4. That which was not the least of my afflictions

fictions was, that I could not know my condition certainly : oh how happy if I knew whether converted or unconverted ! for then would I know what to do ; but, living in this uncertainty, I am most miserable : for I had but apprehensions I was unconverted. 5. In examining of the causes why the Lord trusted me with this sudden and great storm, I thought there was none as to particular guilt, and I thought it drave at something else than punishment for particular faults. 6. My melancholly constitution, and want of company and imployment, did much further my trouble. 7. There would be some calms and quietness of spirit for a great part of the day, by reading of the scriptures especially ; and Satan would cease for a while. 8. It was not with me as in other troubles : for, thro' grace, I was helped to make some head against Satan ; I despaired not at all, nor did by any act of positive judgement conclude I would be damned ; but only I saw hell and sin, and the wrath of God ; and the apprehension was terrible. Yea, there would be great attempts of faith sticking more close to God than ever, so that I never so strongly and sensibly believed ; yea, I thought, as matters stood sometimes, it was impossible I should be cast off : and many times was my heart fixt, so that I was like a rock against whom all the billows in hell would dash, yet did my bow stand strong, and I never had such assurance of faith. 9. I had a deep impression of the things of God : a natural condition and sin appeared, and I felt it worse than hell itself ; the world and vanities thereof terrible, and exceeding dangerous ; it was fearful then to have ado with it, or to be rich ; I saw its day coming : scripture-expressions were weighty ; a Saviour was a big thing in my eyes ; Christ's agonies

agonies were then earnest with me, and I thought that all my days I was in a dream till now, or like a child in jest, and I thought the world was sleeping. O but I thought *Shepherd and Rutherford* spoke and wrote feelingly ! shame, trouble and affliction, want and poverty were sweet and secure. 10. Yet I was wearied of my life, and preferred strangling before it ; my life was bitterness to me, and sorrow did consume me, so as there was a sensible influence on my body, and I looked like a man come from the grave ; yet did none know my trouble. There was a great work to be wrought in me, and it was death to me to think to endure the power and working of God that should produce this effect, altho' I were little more than passive in it. 11. Duties of prayer and reading ; only before I yoked with them, were a terror, and to go in private with this dead heart seemed hell itself ; tho', when I was engaged, they were sweet. The night was sweet, because I had some rest ; but the morning was as the shadow of death, because I was to conflict : I would even have been content to have lyen still perpetually, my spirits were so overfoughten. 12. The devil rested not in the mean time violently and unseasonably to press some strict duties, seeking to undo body and spirit at once, driving furiously as Jehu did.

3. The manner how the Lord supported me, and did me good, and at last delivered me out of this, was by these means ; 1st, By making me considerate ; For at the first assault, the end of which was to perswade me I was unconverted, this assertion was so strongly and violently threaped upon me, that e'er I knew I was dung on my back, and my soul burdened and oppressed, ever I knew how or why : when therefore I found
these

these weights, and my spirit overwhelmed, and the clouds up, I remembered David's words, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul?* So said I, What is this? and why is it thus with me? shall I continually live in an implicate faith, or on mine own apprehensions; and shall I be condemned and live miserably, and never know why? Let us think and consider on this matter; there may some mystery ly at the bottom. Come therefore, my soul, let us see what is it that ails thee: Well, I see thou art troubled, and spiritually troubled, and for a spiritual cause; now, what is this spiritual cause? Because I found it was a suspicion that I was yet in a natural condition, and a stranger to Christ; Now, what grounds have we for this? And let us see what is to be done, and hear patiently all assertions and threaps; let this rain fall to the ground, and then fall thou to exercise. Hereupon my spirit became composed and considerate; and, having the use and exercise of my reason, it did much advantage to me, and made me that I was not like a child driven hither and thither: I was therefore content to ding the bottom out of this, and to examine it to the full. 2dly, I thought it expedient for settling of myself, and keeping my ground unshaken by the batteries of temptations, to lay down some practical conclusions, to which I would ever stick, and always follow, whatever came; which did me much good, and I did draw them from Christ's agonies: 1. To continue praying still, and looking up to God, and never to give over duties; obey still, come what will. 2. Never despair, but always trust and depend, and keep up an interest in God. 3. Be humble and submissive; *Not my will, but thine be done.* Resign yourself to God in this exercise; take not the tutory of thyself in this hazardous sea:

sea upon you; let him quicken, deaden, wound and comfort as he pleases. I cannot express what advantage I found by this. 4. Means was, by being kept by the power of God in the use of all means, of praying, and reading the scriptures, and meditating, whatever temptations I had to the contrary: and though at first I saw little comfort in these duties, but said, as the Israelites of Saul, Will these duties save me from my spiritual enemies? yet by practising I ever found strength and comfort by them, especially scripture in which I found an unusual weight and sweetness. 5. The Lord would suggest some seasonable and calming word unto my soul, such as this, *It is good for a man to hope, and quietly to wait for the salvation of God*: Then it is not good to be discouraged nor casten down. 6. I was made to understand that the spirit of bondage in itself was not good, from these words; *Perfect love casteth out fear*. This I knew not before, and therefore I ever desired a law-work, and durst never meddle with consolations till I had found the law-work; and now, if my terrors and temptations had ceased, I would grieve for that intermission, as though I had lost some precious thing: and this made me more submissive to the Lord's way of guiding me in my exercises, as likewise more freely to use consolations, and to seek recovery out of my present bondage; yea, I found that these terrors and fears did me evil in their own nature, though the Lord, I found, did accidentally bring good out of them. 7. The Lord made me one day understand, Satan had a great hand in my trouble, especially in labouring to create evil thoughts of God in my soul, in tempting me to despair and give over, and discouraging me, and making me think I should never be better; in a violent unseasonable pressing

of

of duties : and hence I reasoned, If these fears proceed from Satan, why should I entertain them? Can any truth or good proceed from him? This made me suspect all was suggested to me tending to fear, and more rationally to ponder what was represented. I fell seriously and diligently to examine this whole matter : I considered the nature of my exercise and trouble, the grounds of it, and the weight of objections ; as likewise, I fell upon examination of my state, I laid down my conclusions and rules, I set down my objections against my sincerity, I pondered them by the line of scripture, and answered them ; I did likewise according to scripture judge of the marks I had of my own sincerity, and examine what might be said : I compared my state with the rule, and with saints, and in the conclusion I found a marvellous light of God's Spirit, through the word, shining on my soul ; and I found that according to the scripture I was converted, and that the names, qualities, practices and exercises of saints did agree with me ; yea, I found something in me wherein I went beyond any hypocrite, tho' I was the least of saints. I did utterly cast aside all marks that I had read in practical books, and did examine them by scripture ; and I found the most part of them unsound and not well cautioned, and some not altogether false, but inconsiderately expressed, and the reader very apt to mistake : as likewise, there was discovered, through this examination, many of mine own mistakes in the nature of sanctification. Oh what need is there of wisdom, and light from above, in giving of marks ! and what a great sin is it, either to write or speak marks at random ? It is true what Shepherd saith, " We have need of a special spirit here." This cost me many weeks exercise, and some years before this

but the most sensible and effectual discovery
 'self was now. O the benefit of considera-
 and a deliberate judgment ! 8thly, God by
 ng hand humbled me, and made me sub-
 e, from a sense and sight of the Lord's so-
 nty, wisdom and eternal holiness, and from
 e of my own wildness (*good is the will of the*
 so as I was made silent before God ; which
 : did much abate the boisterousness of this
 , so that my heart was kept calm, and made
 nply with dispensations ; so as I said from
 :art, My will is evil, and God is good ; and
 he have his will, than I that am sinful ; he
 t do ill or wrong. And for this cause I did
 up some considerations to submission, which
 were sensibly prevalent with me, and by
 lering of which I would usually allay the
 s of my heart when they would appear.
 , I did likewise consider on some com-
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 pe and encouragement, which I drew up,
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 ark hours and dumpish fits, and did find my
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 of the duty, and how to go about it ; where-

in Satan had a hand in pressing it ; and that my unwillingness thereto did proceed not from infirmity ; and that my omission was not in the substance of the duty, but in the manner and degree of freedom, boldness and compassion, and did proceed from ignorance and unbelief. 12thly, I found likewise much mercy, good-will, tenderness and care of Christ towards me in this present exercise ; and much good did it to me, so that the storm was now much over. 13thly, But that which did me most good was, a more full discovery of the covenant of grace, meditations of the gospel, of Christ's gentle nature, as likewise some particular promises that were by the operation of the Spirit very clearly applied ; among which these were the chief, *1 Tim. i. 15. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance. O what of life and sweetness was discovered in that one word one evening after supper, John iii. 17. God sent not his Son to condemn the world ! And that word, Psal. lxxv. 5. God is the confidence of all the ends of the earth ; and he justifies the ungodly. They that know thee will put their trust in thee. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness. And that scripture, 1 Cor. i. 30. God hath made Christ wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. And that in John xv. 16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.* From which these truths were made clear to me ; 1. That nothing in man is the first ground of hope or despair. 2. That the whole ground of our hopes is in Christ alone. 3. That sinners have right to absolute promises ; or, the first ground of faith is an absolute promise : Christ is not a person with whom they have nothing ado, but is their hope and salvation ; and these promises are sayings, though absolute,

hold on for acceptation. 4. That Christ's on is to men as sinners, and not as to whole righteous; *I came not to call the righteous, but to repentance.* It is with sinners Christ hath and not to condemn them, but to give them, and, when they cannot come to him for life, seek them: the fathers must lay up for the son, and not they for the parents. 5. Such is the nature of Christ, that he only came to shew mercy, hath no wrath or law, came not to condemn; *fury is not in me:* and that it is as unreasonable to expect condemnation from Christ, as to expect cold water from fire; and therefore, whoever knows him cannot but believe in him: that there is nothing in Christ but what is the source of joy and comfort. 6. All salvation depends on Christ's good-will only, and every thing hanging thereto, all which is made ours. 7. That Christ himself is the drawer-up of the sinner's fee for heaven and blessedness; Christ is *made wisdom, righteousness, &c. I have given him a covenant to the people.* 8. That the Lord be true to this right freely and absolutely; which free promise is the ground of faith, and not the purchase of faith. 9. That nothing damns but unbelief, in not pressing the Lord with these promises, all which are comprehended in that one promise, *this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came to save sinners.* Here now I fixed on a rock that was able to bide all my weight? Is Christ then the ground of all my hopes? and do my hopes depend wholly on him? have I a promise that all will be well? and is there a promise that to which I must take myself? is this promise given freely of God? Surely yes, though I see nothing in myself but what is the source of grief, sorrow and despair, yet here is

matter of hope ; I cannot misbelieve, un-
flect on Christ : Shall I misdoubt him, w
mercy and no wrath, who came not at all
whose offices and relations are all good
and the like did quiet me, knowing the
happinefs was freely secured in Christ J^es
in whom I was compleat ; yea, I found
end of this storm was, to draw me off r
live in and to depend wholly on C
strength, justification and comfort. 14
natural melancholly was cured by diverti
for I had a call to go elsewhere, where
ment and godly company did me much g
the refreshing of my spirit. And thus
means was the storm gradually allayed ;
trial for me I ever endured.

4. The ends of which dispensatio
1. To try, exercise and strengthen my fai
was never so lively exercised, nor did ev
such a conflict, nor ever had such sure
For by considering the gospel, thought
granted I was never converted, yet, su
ought to come to Christ, and look up to
expect from him, and be of good chee
God is the *confidence of all the ends of*
And my consolation must be as solid a
as the ground thereof, so that with thi
abide all darts, this answereth all object
is *the rock higher than I*. 2. To make m
more serious, and to have a deeper and
apprehension of the things of God : for
is, till this time I looked on myself, and
part of professors, to be but in jest with
ligion ; and, I blefs the Lord, some of
pressions remain still. 3. To discover t
evil of the world, of the pleasures, profi
mour thereof ; and to bring my soul t

pliance with the cross of Christ, as that whereon most security and quietness is to be found : *he that loseth his life shall find it.* The world is an evil, and only evil, the great bar that hinders from Christ ; it is loadened with sin, full of danger, and an enemy to God ; it is Christ's competitor, rival and enemy : and this was not only discovered in me, but the aversion and fear of the world was in some measure wrought in me. 4. To acquaint me with Satan's devices whereby he hinders the work of salvation, the many sophisms and mistakes of my own heart in the nature of sanctification : it made me search more narrowly into many things than ever I did. 5. To make me esteem the scriptures, and walk more closely by them in all my ways : for they only speak aright of God, of dispensations ; they are the foundation of hope and faith, and we must judge of things according as they are represented in scripture, and not by reason or fancy. 6. To stir me up to be more profitable to others, which was a great challenge now, and the neglect of it a heavy burden ; and the duty itself was much pressed at this time. 7. To live off myself and sense, on the Lord Jesus alone ; and not on him as felt, but on him as given in his Word and promise ; and not on any thing of him to be given here, but what we are to receive in heaven. The conclusion was this, My grace is sufficient ; *When I am weak, then am I strong* ; and here is rest and life. And by this storing, and the conclusions I then laid, I became more settled, and less shaken with temptations ; and this did much establish me in faith, patience, humility and duty.

5. I will conclude with a few observations :
 1. Soul-trouble hath sometimes a sweetness in it ;
for, considering this was the hand of God, I laid
 myself

myself flat under it : Now, Lord, let me never out of this furnace until my dross go away. 2. I found soul-trouble not good in itself, but evil, and that it produces much weakness and aversion from duty. 3. When God is angry, every thing is terrible : duties, meat, drink and company, had a hell stamped upon them ; and a little loss, having wrath stamped on it, is a world of evil. 4. The world is a dangerous thing and a great evil, and the comforts of it a hell : it is good to be continually afflicted here ; *in the world ye shall have tribulation*. Most of my exercise did drive at this. 5. Whatever our exercise or temptations be, it is profitable to pray, and continue in the means. 6. It is good to be considerate, and not to be rash in closing with apprehensions and suggestions. 7. It is a sad affliction to an exercised soul to want good company ; and evil carnal company is a hell itself. 8. Soul-trouble hath its time ; it is not always alike violent, but I find sometimes a calm, and at other times it comes in frowns and fits : the evil hour. 9. We should not murmur that the Lord doth not lead us according to our minds ; but, in exercises especially, we should let the Lord guide us as best seems him, and a patient surrender of ourselves doth much good. 10. There may be many sweet hours and little deliverances in a soul-exercise e'er all be done ; I was many times caught up to heaven, but anon plunged to hell. 11. The best mean of settlement is to live by faith in Jesus Christ alone, and to live at a distance from the world. 12. A soul may have many enemies to wrestle with in one soul-trouble, but he hath not the same one to wrestle always with. Sometimes he hath the wrath of God, sometimes an evil heart ; and the soul should continually conflict with one of these

at once, according as they invade him. 13. No soul-trouble will cure all evils perfectly; they but help in part. 14. The great end of such trials is to exercise faith, and to waken people, and to make them more serious. Many other things might be observed. This befel me when I was 27 years of age, in November and December 1665.

SECT. VII.

Of what befel me thereafter.

1. **N**Otwithstanding of this furnace, yet, when I was out of it, I found much dross: for, 1. I was grievously oppressed with a spirit of sloth and indisposition to all manner of duties. 2. There was a legal spirit, that made me act in fear, and not in love, or in faith to be accepted; which did represent God as a judge, and that he had evil ends in desiring obedience; whereby there was much forced work. 3. A kind of aversion and strangeness to God and heaven, not having such intimate and loving thoughts of him; and withal, a lothness to go to heaven, as a strange place. 4. Likewise, I found a strong league with the world, and the power of it considerable and strong; which hath cost me until this day much conflict and hard work. 5. My deadness and ignorance remained and grew upon me, so that I was dark in my conceiving, and untender in my apprehensions; so that several errors in my conversation were vented, such as idle words, vain thoughts, excess in the use of lawful comforts, pride in thought and speech departing from God.

2. Yet did some of my dross go away with this furnace; and blessed be the Lord, that made this trial profitable to me: for, 1. I was more diligent in doing good to others than formerly, and therefore would be oftentimes minding the poor and ignorant in private, praying for them, thinking of the way to do them good, and stirring up my soul thereunto. And as there were some thoughts of this in private, so there was outward and practical effecting of this; I would go to their houses, instruct and exhort them, and pray in their houses, and occasionally instruct them and others whom I met (tho' of late I have been more remiss in this) and thereby found much good to myself, and my gifts in this increased. 2. I was more strict and tender in my conversation than formerly, and durst not take such liberty, and therefore cried out against that looseness and wantonness that I saw but too common. 3. I was by this made more acquainted with spiritual exercises of the Lord's method, and of Satan's devices; with the nature of sanctification, and the many mistakes anent it. A great deal of my mists and confusions were hereby blown away, and many hid things of darkness brought to light. I understood by this much scripture better than formerly. 4. My spirit was made more serious, and the matters of salvation and common truths more deeply ingraven, and made more weighty to me. I saw another sight, and had another manner of feeling of sin, wrath, heaven and hell; I prized Christ and grace more; I feared sin, Satan and hell more; truths were more lively and sensible upon my spirit; the matters of God's law appeared great by this. 5. I found my spirit more settled and established on Christ, and less liable to shakings and temptations.

tions ; so that I have lived as to assurance and faith of my interest, and of Christ's love, from that day to this, more secure than ever, being (as I conceived) better rotted, and having stronger foundations than before ; and better acquainted with the exercise of faith. 6. I found my spirit by this more meekned and tamed, and less hasty, the violent bitter quality taken away, and I, as it were, broken and plowed, and so more inured to the yoke, so as nothing came wrong. I understand now something of Christian patience, am less amazed with disappointments, and more submissive, quiet and silent. 7. The world appeared vain, terrible and bitter ; and the evil thereof prized more than the good thereof ; and the yoke, cross and reproach of Christ more lovely. 8. More diligent in private duties of reading, meditation and prayer ; set to conflict with sin more strongly : and some impressions of this yet remain.

3. As for my exercise and progress of life ;
 1. After my inward terrors as to their power were removed, some degrees remained, that would at some times overwhelm my heart, but did not last. 2. I was smitten in my body thereafter with a painful boil under my oxter, with which I had been threatned some years before ; which, with the pain thereof, did at first cast me into a fever, and my breath was stopt by the oppression of the spirits ; which made me have some impressions of death. During which time, Satan was let out again, and was most violent in his temptations ; and my heart was so casten down, that one afternoon, being to draw in the Lord's yoke, there was such faintness, weakness and aversion to duty, that I thought I should never endure it, and was not far from casting it off altogether ;

together ; but God pitied the anguish of my soul, and did break these spiritual bonds, and put my heart in frame. During this sickness he miraculously allayed the pain of my boil, and speedily, and that without means, cured it ; for however I bought some things to prevent it, yet, looking on it as a punishment from God, I knew not if I could be free to take the rod out of his hand, and to counterwork him. And indeed I lost nothing by this ; for, coming and giving my cheeks to this smiter, my chastisement was very gentle and of short continuance, so as I was helped to continue in duties ; and, when the boil brake, I resolved to go more mightily and diligently about the Lord's work than ever. I by this means prized health more. (2.) Made more diligent in duties, had a conflict with death, I found it easy to leave the world : yet was both Christ and heaven strange, and so had not such desires to be with him, nor longing, because I was not a good servant, had not my work done, nor walked so closely with him. (3.) The Lord one day represented the evil of the world to me : this was my first exercise. This was in February 1666. In March and April I continued in a wrestling condition, and was sometimes in M. sometimes at home, and I lay groaning under and fighting with my indispositions to duties : strange thoughts of God, and spirit of bondage in my actings, with some terrors, which would not continue long.

3. In summer thereafter, the hardness of my heart began to mollify, and my bonds broke on a sabbath day's afternoon ; while others were at church, and I stayed at home, *I called to mind the days of old*, and some of the Lord's ways with me, which opened the doors of my soul, and love quickned in longing after him, and grieving for his

his absence, and for my ways ; which disposition continued and strengthened me. 4. Thereafter was put to learn a new exercise, which was, to serve providences, and to consider the ends of God's particular and general providences, the ends of afflictions, of sins, of backslidings, of impositions, and to remark some steps of love in them, which did me much good. He did let me see much love in dispensations, enlightened me in my duties, kept me from wrong constructions, and did much establish and comfort me. 5. Being to quit our chief dwelling and lands, according to my transaction three years ago, and some mistakes betwixt me and relations falling out, I stayed alone, and went to another contiguous aire, where were some lively christians and my very dear friends, with whom I spent time profitably, edifying and building up one another. There I resolved to set up extraordinary days of humiliation again, and so effectually, that a glory was seen in the ways of God and of his people which I saw not before, and love to Christ advanced. 6. After I came home I set up humiliation-lays, and made it my exercise to conflict with and overcome the world, to close fully and wholly with Christ, to glorify him with all my heart, and him only : but it would not do, notwithstanding of some violent attempts I made ; whence errors issued, yet not altogether in vain, because hunger was increased, as likewise knowledge. 7. About the middle of harvest, thro' meditation on the law and the gospel and the easy yoke of Christ, the spirit of bondage and legal actings begun to be cast out, and I in my actings was helped to be more willing, and less constrained, doing things more evangelically and freely, and by which I found greater strength to serve Christ :
and

and I found that word of the Israelites boam true in me to Christ, *make my yoke I will serve thee*; and the easiness of it be the great motive he presseth us with in it: that the Lord doth accept little hands, and will himself help. This consideration of the ends of God's mercies, did much strengthen me in them, covered much of Christ's love, and yoke easy and lovely. 8. About what time after, I found my heart warming to the aversion to him wearing off, through in my memory some steps of the evidences and dealings towards me: as my eyes were first opened to see an infinity of consolation and love, which before me; there I remembered all the pain he took in preparing me for himself, how he suffered at my hands, all the care he took in my wilderness-condition, how he had convinced me, and how many times he did uphold my spirit: then did I see the tract of the Lord's dealings with me, all this pursuing me constantly with kindness. 9. I found likewise my aversion wearing away, and that any apprehension of this kind did proceed from a mistaken day as I was praying, and earnestly desiring communion with Christ, and more considering God's image, and mourning for my vanity it was suggested to me, why dost thou have of thy great aversion to heaven? for heaven but enjoyment of Christ and perfect rest; therefore, in prizing the one, I prize the other, and from this it proceeded that I longed for heaven. Shall I think ill, said I, to be in whose company I only find peace.

? who hath with his visitations so often re-
 ht my spirit, without whom I can do nothing,
 without whom I am hell itself; who hath
 seeking me so passionately, and whom I have
 many days been seeking. 10. About the same
 : likewise I was convinced of a great sin of un-
 thankfulness, the evil and sinfulness of which was
 overed, and desires to abound in this grace
 thankfulness; which was thus occasioned: I
 id some others that had outgone me far in
 and gratitude, speaking much of Christ's
 and kindness to them, and what they were
 ting with, and how much they made of small
 s; oh ungrateful wretch (said I to myself) thou
 oftentimes meeting with quickning consolations
 and visitations, by which thy dying life is
 erved, and yet take no notice of it; and like
 nan, ye say, *what is all this to me?* not one
 thankful acknowledgement for all this, nor one
 ng word spoken in commendation of Christ
 all this. I judged quickenings and visitations
 his kind but common and ordinary and small,
 use I saw not Christ in a great fulgor and glo-

That which after some time did heal this en-
 n my soul was, considering that tho' those
 gs in themselves were but mean, yet they
 : not the effects of my own pains and endeavours,
 : the breathings and gifts of God's spirit, and
 efore, in respect they are from him, to be in-
 ely prized; yea, the purchase of Christ's
 od, and a pledge and testimony of the Lord's
 lness, and therefore to be received, and I
 not to look to the gift but the giver: the
 : of favours and tokens from a prince is high-
 alued. And this did help me to thankful-
 , and I did set a value upon mercies. 11. I

was at this time preſt vehemently to cloſe walking ; to an entire, cordial and full reſignation of myſelf to God ; to keep diſtance with the world ; to be for the Lord and him only, and for none other ; and was made ſenſible of one point of looſe walking, that I did not endeavour to obſerve the Lord's providences, and that I did not walk in his counſel, and depend on him, acknowledging him in all my ways : and this the Lord likewise helped. 12. I began a little afterwards to ſtudy patience ; I got this leſſon in my hand, and made ſome ſmall progreſs therein : patience I thought and took up under the notion of the ſoul's invincible going on in duties, notwithstanding of all evils ; when a man keeps his place and ground, and ſtands out like a rock, not amazed with any amazement, not diſcouraged nor rankled, not fainting, not giving over, but continuing in a conſtant frame of ſpirit. What I ſought not I learned, and what I ſought I got not : God answered my prayers tho' not in my way, and ſhewed he accepted them ; he led me in his way to heaven, and not in mine. 13. At laſt, that the warning I got five years ſince in the ſouth might be fulfilled of the bonds and afflictions that were abiding me, I was taken with caption for a debt which I had paid : only my truſtee and near relation, who received the money from me to be given to my creditor, did knaviſhly apply it to his own uſe ; for which, I not paying it, I was taken and kept three days in a chamber, till courſe was taken with it ; which occaſioned my going ſouth, where I continued much of two years, ſometimes in the ſouth, and ſometimes in the north. My condition during this time was a wreſtling condition with the ſons of Zeruiah that were too ſtrong for me ; little or no overcoming,

et violent wrestling. Some work I got done ;

wrote a treatise of faith, of the covenant of race ; I wrote a treatise of forty sheets of paper, on several subjects useful for the times : I wrote also a treatise against hearing the curates ; as likewise, I wrote this book of my life, in which I found marvelous assistance, and found it a blessed mean to warm my heart with love to Christ, to see through many intricacies of my life which were before as a mist to me, and did tend much to my settling. As likewise, the Lord blessed my fellowship so to the south-country professors, that several of them were awakened ; and generally my conversation was edifying, and was somewhat shining, so that I received much honour hereby ; and, while I honoured God, the Lord honoured me. I kept christian fellowship with them, prayed with and exhorted them, which was not in vain, especially in Edinburgh, where sometimes spake four times in a week. The scope of my discourses was in exalting holiness ; against a slight work of grace ; against looseness and laxness ; against formality ; against sloth and unprofitableness ; and pressing them to be doing good ; against discouragements and unbelief, and pressing to believe ; as likewise against complying with the prelates and curates, studying to render them as odious as I could, and my pains were not in vain.

4. *Lastly*, it pleased the Lord by degrees likewise to look favourably on my outward condition, and did piece and piece deliver me from my afflictions, and vexatious debts and wants, and now hath in some measure exalted mine head, and given me by strange providences what he had taken from me : for I humbled myself under the sense of the calamities of our family, and my own

particular wants ; I besought him to keep me from utter destruction : and the Lord was pleased to hear ; he destroyed by death my chief enemies, I found shifts to pay my many petty debts, gained our law-action, and was restored to the possession of my ancient possessions again ; tho' I be sorely undone and vexed with multiplicity of cares and evil neighbours, as likewise I'm sensible of the guilt of many broken vows, and find myself prejudiced by the smiles of the world, and the kindness from the Lord, because I stand in need of it now. Thus have I briefly run over the most memorable circumstances in all my life until this time, being now thirty years of age and unmarried. I have been the more brief in this concerns these last six years, in respect I have said them at more length contained in my diaries, and because I purpose to come over to these things, touching my natural condition and my exercises, temptations, evils, duties, and course of life, in the next chapter, to which I shall refer any thing of this nature.

CHAP. VII.

Relating some things touching my present condition.

SECT. I.

Wherein are contained some general personal observations in reference to myself.

1. **A**FTER a long and serious search in my heart before God, I am by the works of love towards me, and his works o

my soul, made to conclude that I am born over-
 , and that there is not only a formal partial
 ge wrought, such as may be in hypocrites, but
 I am visited with the salvation and love of his
 n : for I find a great and universal change
 ght by an almighty mean in my soul, grow-
 rather than decaying ; so that thus I stand
 as to this matter : I have both word and seal,
 and carriage for it. Yet, 2dly, Do I find
 ny belief of my interest much shaken and
 assaulted by sin, which falls like a blot upon
 y evidences, and takes away the comfort of
 , and fills me with some sudden apprehen-
 all may be wrong ; tho' these many years
 ositive act of judgement I was not suffered
 nclude my unsoundness, but rather, ration-
 nd deliberately weighing the matter, made
 nclude I was converted. 3dly, I have there-
 concluded it to be my duty to be thankful,
 aw near to God by faith ; and to search, by
 r, meditation and reading, my estate more
 ly ; to consider the nature of sanctification
 exactly, and ponder objections and grounds
 ubting ; to pray to the Lord daily to open
 state to me ; to practise obedience, and go
 the exercise of faith, love and humility and
 graces ; to be marking providences, and
 ord's carriage to my soul.

I find I am exceeding sinful, and one com-
 l with more than ordinary infirmities. Be-
 conversion I have been suffered to run out
 re open acts of rebellion than others, such
 rearing, cursing, blasphemy, drunkenness,
 th-breaking, sinning against light and con-
 ce, extraordinary strangeness and unprofita-
 fs, greater and manier blots in my conversa-
 than in others, having greater aggravating
 Q3 circumstances :

circumstances : so that I think I grieve the Lord more than any other ; I have a harder, blinder and more carnal heart than others have ; so that I conclude myself the least of saints, not worthy to be called a saint. 2. And therefore think, I am called to humility and submission. 3. To love the Lord beyond others, as having forgiven me most. 4. To be more watchful against sin, having such an ill heart within, so ready to slip ; and to walk in greater fear, and to be more diligent : for, if the iron be blunt, it needeth the greater force. 5. To depend most on the Lord Jesus, as having least in myself, and therefore to make up all my wants with his fulness ; that I must live wholly on him ; the sick need the physician. 6. To press me to be more holy in time to come, for a revenge ; that as I have *yielded my members weapons of unrighteousness, &c.*

3. I have been and am like to be extraordinary afflicted. I have ever found trouble in the world, and God in his providence doth ever sow enmity betwixt me and it : I have never gotten rest for the sole of my foot there ; but its embraces are poison, thorns, prejudice and vexation. Sometimes and ordinarily great and extraordinary wants to supply credit and debts ; great disappointments, and evil-will from the men of the world ; rejected and looked down upon by professing friends in my extremities, so that I know not one of my nearest relations and friends but have put great disobligations upon me, and have been bitterness to me, and have made me weary of life, the people of God only excepted,, who (as they were never able to help me in my outward condition,) yet did never trouble or vex me : the Lord reward their labour of love. And if the world hath smiled on me, and given me some of
her

her favours, and I thinking to rest me upon them, they proved like the staff of Egypt, and at last failed me and pricked my hand: it was the Lord only that supported me and kept from sinking; and it was the mere providence of God that did me any good or deliverance, and none other: and I am like to find the good of the world more prejudicial to me than the evil thereof, and to vex my spirit more. 2. I conclude myself hereupon called to live at distance with the world, to set my heart by it, to fight and conflict with it, to be mortified to it, and to look to another rest, seeing this is not it; to set my affections on heaven where Christ is; as likewise, to look on this as a token of love and of good, that *I am not of the world, for then the world would love me*; and lastly, to arm myself with admirable patience and fortitude to endure the evils of the world constantly without fainting.

4. I have a weak, complying, soft nature, contrary to my will and judgement; so that I find an averfness to that which both my judgement and will are for. I bless God for a clear Judgement and understanding; for I am much given to pry and search into the bottom of things, and therein have been assisted: but my miserable soft nature yields to every thing, and this makes all duties that are attended with labour and boldness a great burden to me. I am judged by men clean contrary, to be rude and contrary to all men; but little know they the wrestling I have with my own heart, and what a torment I bred to myself when I did not comply with men. Oh how much need of grace and divine assistance! for no less will do my turn; I have nature always to resist. 2. I hereupon find a great resistance to all *manner of duties*; so that there is no duty I go about,

about, but I find Satan and the power of sin in me ready to resist me in it; and I get nothing easily done, but over a mountain of difficulties, heart & providences and all crossing: what a mighty work to pray, to meditate. to speak or do any thing! oh sloth! 3. My life is a life of faith, and not of sense; I know little sense of dawting; the word is my only rule. 4. I find God's love and my religion manifested rather in doing for God, than in fellowship with God. I see no great love in manifestations of himself, but in sanctifying me and enabling me to my duty: and the most of my religious exercises are in reference to searching out truths and mysteries, in a humble and fixt frame of spirit; and some courage and strength to do some work for gloryfying God, and edyfying my neighbour. 5. I gather love and good, not at first, or by any one dispensation at first, but by a continued track of kindness: it is from many things jointly I gather love, rather than from any one particular; and I find good after a long time rather than at the beginning; God drives his work in me leisurely, and by degrees, and not at once; I know few extraordinary things. Christ's motion in my soul is without din or noise; I see, by this, need of patience. 6. My joy, happiness and hope is more in what is in Christ, and in the promise, and to be fulfilled in heaven to me, than in any thing I find in myself by sense: I were of all men the most miserable, and hated of God, and little beloved, if I had nought else to look to. 7. I not only find an opposition from my nature, and sin and Satan to duties, but from providences; and this I judged as trials, and to be for the exercise of patience.

5. That which most in earth I desire is, to do great things for God, to suffer much for him, to be signal in honouring of him, to finish my ministry. I contemn and undervalue the world and carnal folk as dung, and all the world's kindness, though my nature will not suffer me to express it; my *spirit is willing*, but herein I find *the flesh is weak*. My unprofitableness and sinfulness is my greatest grief in the world; I had rather be cast out of God's comfortable presence (so as not to be hated of him) than out of his service: I have been sometimes thinking that, if these times last, my heart will break, if I be continually shut up this way, and all the passages stopt of doing for the Lord.

SECT. II.

Declaring some strong evils under which I mourn, and against which I wrestle.

I Find it with me as with the Israelites, Judg. i. that there were some nations that they could not drive out: so I may say, that there are some strong evils that I cannot get mastered at all, and which continually afflict me, and discourage me.

1st *Evil* is, That distance the Lord keeps with me in word, in prayer, in providences, commands, threatenings, promises, mercies, judgments; I find little of God in them, so that I may say, *I am more brutish than any man, and have not the knowledge of the Holy One*: Oh how little of him is known! I dare not deny but I see him darkly and confusedly, whereby my soul longs for him, and mourns for his absence as the greatest evil; but yet I see him not distinctly and clearly in his glory with the seeing of the eye by that marvelous

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lous light: Oh Lord my blindness! Oh blessed heaven, where we shall see God, not as in a mystery, but *know as we are known!* and, alas, I know no more of him than before. This calls for mourning and humiliation, and addressing to Christ to open the eyes of the blind; and for purity and holiness, for these *shall see God*; and for *following on to know the Lord* in his attributes, in his Son Jesus, in his Word, and in his providences by observing them.

2d *Evil* is, 'The low measure of God's love ventioned to my soul: manifestations and influences run very low, and beat weakly in my soul; I find not in God what doth abundantly satisfy; I meet not with that which is called *the power of God*. In a word, I am kept in a low condition, and very mean: sanctification, light, life and comfort are but sparingly letten out to me; and in my fulness I cry I want still. This is to humble me, and make me long for heaven: Though, blessed be the Lord's name, I meet with something, yea, more than I deserve, or ever I have been thankful for; nor did I ever kindle a fire to him for nought. I comfort myself with this, that I have the earnest, and that is but small in respect of the stock; a little does arle the bargain as well as much: that this world and time is a time of wants, and therefore the Lord's people are a generation of seekers: that there is much in Christ, in the promise, and much to be letten out in heaven. I get these directions; 1. To be humble. 2. To be living on the fulness of Christ, and abundant joys of heaven. 3. To be thankful for small mercies, for that is the way to get more. 4. To long for heaven, and weary of the earth. 5. To study mortification to the world, for *the rich are sent away empty*; to keep a room for Christ.

Christ. 6. To labour much; for *the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.* 7. To do good to others; for *he that watereth shall be watered.*

3d *Evil* is, Security and slightness of spirit as to spiritual things. I am not so sensibly affected with the evil of sin and of a natural condition, so as to wonder at God's patience, to tremble for fear, and smitten with compassion to others, who are yet in their sins. Oh I am but in jest, and half sleeping and waking; though I know that nothing lies nearer, nor am I more exercised with any thing, than with spiritual things: I see no help for this, but serious consideration of the great matters of the law, and continual prayers to God for awakening and seriousness, and less seriousness in worldly affairs, for these take away the heart.

4th *Evil.* I can seldom win to the believing, joyful and comfortable thoughts of heaven. Though I really prize the thing, to wit, enjoyment of God in Christ for evermore, and perfect conformity to him, yet have I not as yet come to any measure of perfection in this lesson; the great cause of which I take to be, that I am so little in the endeavour of this: It is something present, rather than what is to come, that comforts me. Oh to see this glory as mine, so as to be made heavenly thereby!

5th *Evil.* That I cannot, in the act of closing with Christ, cordially, fully and clearly give up myself to the Lord Jesus alone for evermore; that I cannot expressly and cordially marry with him. Oh for a day of espousals! it is true, my heart really closes with Christ, and hates the world, and my desires are, to be for him and him only, to do and suffer much for him; but, when I come to covenant with him, there is deadness, heartlessness,

heartlessness, double-mindedness, confusions and ignorance, whereby much unfixedness doth arise: I can neither covenant with him as a spouse, nor live with him as a spouse. Oh my unsteadfastness in his covenant, and dealing falsely with him! I could never to my satisfaction go rightly about this duty of personal covenanting; I durst not promise, lest I fulfill it not.

6th *Evil.* A secret love to the old husband the law: for, with the Jews, I am *seeking to establish my own righteousness*; doing duties, and resolving to be strict, for this end, to get glory from my conscience to myself, and that I might thereby appear the more glorious unto others: and I would be content to have my works here be a sharer in my room in heaven, and to be a part of my joy, and to have my happiness come that way; so that what was falsely attributed to David, 1 Sam. xvii. 26 by his brother Eliab, that out of the pride of his heart he had come to the battle; so it is with me in going against my lusts and temptations, it hath been to gain honour thereby, that I have undertaken it: and when God hath put down this idol of self-righteousness, and by permitting me to fall, hath crossed the setting up of this Dagon, I have marked I have mourned more that my resolutions have been broken, and my design broken and thwarted, than for any dishonour or grief done to God; so that, though I see an insufficiency in my duties, and so cannot trust in them to save me, but forced to take another course, yet do I love these duties, and so love them as I would by that way come to heaven: whereby unspeakable prejudice hath come to me; for God hath set himself continually against this evil and idol, in respect I have been seeking to glory and boast in it; and therefore have

have I never been able to keep my resolutions, lest I should dote on this Babel. And because I have been seeking mine own glory thereby, rather than to honour Christ, I think it is duty on me therefore to consider the evil of this sin, the wildness thereof, and to mourn for it, and confess it, and labour, by setting before me the work of Christ, to prefer his grace and righteousness for gaining of glory, and to the honour of purchasing heaven by my works; that the song of praise may be only to the Lamb, and not unto us. Oh it is difficult to quit self-righteousness! it is a precious idol.

7th *Evil*. I find a want of the Spirit, of the power and demonstration of the Spirit, in praying, speaking and exhorting; that whereby men are mainly convinced, and whereby men see more in the Lord's people than in others; whereby they are a terror and a wonder unto others, so as they stand in awe of them; that glory and majesty whereby respect and reverence is procured, that whereby Christ's sermons were differenced from those of the Scribes and Pharisees; *He spake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*; that which Paul calls *the power and demonstration of the Spirit*; and which is mentioned, Micah iii. 8. *I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, to declare to the house of Jacob their sin*, which I judge to be the beams of God's majesty and Spirit of holiness breaking out and shining through his people, whereof they, their words and carriage are in some measure partakers; which is mentioned, 2 Cor. iii. 18. 1 Pet. v. 1. *Partakers of the glory*, which now and then the Lord in some measure reveals, transfiguring them before the world; but shall one day be manifested in such a manner and measure as the saints know not what they shall

be, when Christ shall be admired in them. But my foul garments are on ; and, alas, I am *lying among the pots* : Woe is me, the crown of glory and majesty is fallen off my head ; and my words are weak and carnal, and not mighty, whereby contempt is bred : no remedy for this, but humility, self-loathing, and a studying to maintain fellowship with God, for this made Moses's face to shine ; to walk circumspectly, for *a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine* ; and to express holiness, and glorify God, and then the Lord will honour thee.

8th *Evil*. I find not direct, plain and particular returns of my prayers, though I find indirect and material returns, whereby I have been made to see and conclude, that it hath been good for me to draw near to God ; nor can I look on my returns as the returns of my prayer. Not observing of returns I find to have great influence on this.

9th *Evil*. Want of blessing on my labours to others, especially the unconverted ; though I know and find that saints have gotten good, and others put in some good moods : but I fear I have drawn none from Satan to God ; I take but little pains in this.

10th *Evil*. I cannot get the lesson of patient waiting and depending on God until the end of a trial learned ; but ordinarily, after I am set and engaged to wait, I misbelieve and turn impatient, and my heart goes astray and turns careless ; and then possibly, when this thread is broken, I set myself to duties : and then the Lord's visiting of my spirit with new influences, is like Samuel's coming to Saul after he had sacrificed ; so as I cannot say the Lord's return hath been the fruit of my waiting : so as I think I never knew what
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is to abide in a patient depending, waiting on God in a night of absence till the morning, but unhappily give over my dependence, and interrupt my waiting by my carelessness, and taking comfort from some creature; which tho' it proceed not from a deliberate wilfulness, as his,

Kings vi. 33. yet it is true, I am stollen to do that really which he did advisedly: so that as yet

I have not learned that uninterrupted waiting. So that when the Lord visits my soul with refreshing thoughts of my privileges, and puts it in health, yet very much of my comfort is impaired through the remembrance of my uneven carriage during the want of it; whereby I am moved to think, that it is not deal-come, but accidentally and not in love, when not helped to wait on the Lord for it. It hath once comforted me to think, that tho' the mercy hath not come as a fruit of either my waiting or prayers, yet hath it come as a fruit of Christ's prayers and merits and sufferings, and this hath satisfied me.

11th *Evil*. I cannot win to apply particular mercies fully and clearly; so as to have a persuasion of such a mercy I am seeking for; though I win to some application of general promises, such as these, *Christ came to save sinners; God sent at his Son to condemn the world; Christ came to seek and save that which was lost*; which quiet my Spirit: so that when I am reading of particular promises, for removing of such and such straits, and for giving such and such blessings, they do not comfort me more than in their general nature they shew God's goodness; and therefore I find not strength in them to plead for such a particular mercy, nor to persuade my mind of it that I shall obtain it; only they in the general quiet me. And hence I am not distrustful of

my salvation, or of my happiness in the general; but whether I shall get such a particular mercy, or be delivered from such an evil. All the promises of deliverance do not breed in me an assurance or persuasion of it; so as, though God hath granted me many particular mercies, especially in temporals, which I have prayed for, yet of none of them was I assured, though I have been made to hope before the granting and fulfilling of it; though some say, A faith of dependence is only requisite in such cases. But, besides the contrary experience of the saints, and the rendering void all particular promises, I have much to say against this. Oh to know what this means, which is in John! *We know that if we ask according to his will, he heareth us, and granteth our desires; and this confidence we have of him.*

12th Evil. I cannot win above the fears of men, so as to break out in open defiance and arms against the world; but am kept in strong chains of fear and bashfulness to displease them, so as I cannot boldly reprove, exhort or be free with many whom yet I know or strongly suspect to be in a sad condition, especially if they be great ones: and, when at any time I win to do any thing of this, it is with a great deal of reluctance, nay, greater than to lay my head down on the block; and I strike so sparingly when I lift my rod, that I scarce touch them, which comes from my complying and soft easy nature: infomuch that my neglects of such duties have been matter of my greatest exercises, and I think I fear not so much their prejudice or outward loss, as the thing itself is grievous, and displeasing of men, and to be thought ill of them.

13th Evil. I can never win to a watchful, self-diffident and fearing frame, when at any time enlarged; but, notwithstanding of my multiplied falls, I will, when in any good frame, or gotten up again, with Peter, be perswaded that I will never be so as before; but will confidently promise to do this or that, and will not believe that any temptation will break this resolution: which confidence is not founded on the Lord, but comes from a presumptuous conceit and trust I have in myself. In a word, I cannot win to misbelieve my own heart, nor be so perswaded of its weakness and deceitfulness: it is true, in great matters I am diffident of myself, but in small matters and resolutions I go about them continually in my own strength, and ever come short of them.

14th Evil. I can never win to carry rightly in public occasions, but am ever the worse of them; I meet with little of God; and see so little of him, and get so little grace exercised, and am so carnal while doing any little civil business even to which I have a call, that, prepare my heart as I will e'er I go out, and watch never so carefully, I find my whole man poisoned, and myself worse, and I come home with a world of challenges, so that company and civil business are a terror to me, and travail, a going to hell itself. I never know what to do when out of my chamber; I have not yet known what it is to traffic Christianly in the world, but have been carnal in my ends and carriage, forgotten God, drowned in worldly matters: Oh when shall I be spiritual in carnal actions; in eating, drinking, bargaining, doing all as God's work! And when I shall get and do good in public occasions!

15th *Evil*. The promises and the gospel, with Scripture-consolations, make me trust, believe and hope, and quiet me in all my afflictions; yet do not so abundantly satisfy me, as to make me rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, and as to lose sense of any other thing.

16th *Evil*. I can never win to keep my resolutions, so as in my practice to walk perfectly with God, so as to walk in peace; but every day I have challenges, not for sins of mere infirmity, but for such sins as might be helped, and which by mere unwatchfulness I fall into; such as to continue long departing from God, entertaining vain thoughts, vain idle words, mispending of time, excess in lawful comforts, slothing of private duties, doing things rashly, and such like, which are not wholly voluntary, or yet wholly of mere infirmity. Oh to sin but of mere infirmity! To walk thus perfectly with God I cannot, but there hath ever been a breach: by what I can learn, I never kept my vows even when the matter was possible.

17th *Evil*. Continual great unwillingness & indispositions to duties of all kinds, driving ever like Pharaoh's chariots (tho', when once engaged in the duty, I find more delight and sweetness ordinarily in them, than from the world) so as there is unwillingness to go to them, pain in them, and gladness when they are done; but especially in the engaging. Oh the power, wicked power in me, resisting God, and drawing back from him!

18th *Evil*. That I do not grow or go forward generally in the ways of God, nor yet get a particular work and exercise thorough; I think I am like *the door that turneth itself on the hinges*. I make a motion in prayer, resolving and professing

sing ; but I am still where I was ; I find the same ignorance, the same deadness, the same indispositions, the same unprofitableness, the same unbelief, the same power of sin as before ; I fight ; I wrestle, but do not overcome : I am exercised with troubles and other providences, but I see not what comes of them, they go away like knotless threads ; and there is no end of my labour.

19th *Evil*. That I get so little light, comfort or strength from publick ordinances ; pray, watch, prepare as I will ; I mean sacraments, meetings, sermons : I find not nor see the power and glory of God, so as to draw near to him ; I meet not with God in them : I find not sin mortified nor subdued, nor grace increased ; and seldom is my heart bettered, but I find a constantly dead, lifeless, indisposed heart, and no sensible alteration in the time ; and any sensible good I get is in private, tho' I find a real insensible good in publick ordinances.

20th *Evil*. Above all, I find a great unwillingness to teach, exhort and do good to others, or to glorify God publickly ; I cannot delight in this, nor go about this in faith of a blessing, nor with success, nor earnestly ; but there is with me much constrained work, many occasions slighted of going about it, and the heart itself dead and heartless, and untouched with the glory of God, or the good of the person, especially if unconverted.

21st *Evil*. I find not a power perswading me of any truth : I have only a weak opinion and love to it, but I find not God with a mighty power revealing and perswading of truth ; yea, there hath been much of nature in particular truths, tho' as to my general change and illumination there hath been a sensible almighty power ; therefore

fore am I still weak in my belief and practice. I have other evils, but these I find the strongest, and that stick closest and continue longest; I fight against and mourn under these, but they continue still in their strength.

SECT. III.

Declaring my present exercises, lessons I am learning, studying, and in which I have made some proficiency.

MY life is a mystery to me; what I purpose and intend, that do I not: tho' I have been little exercised, and as little advanced in these fore-mentioned exercises; yet hath the Lord been exercising me with some things which I intended, beyond my design; as,

1. I have been called to exercise the life of faith, to walk by it and not by sight; in which, by the Lord's revelation of the gospel, and from some consideration on 2 Cor. v. 7. I have been exercised, especially thro' temptations, which seek to make me misbelieve, and do discourage me.

2. The Lord hath been learning me, and I have been exercised in the grace of submission to the Lord's will in crossing mine; and I win to write a hearty Amen thereunto, and to say, good is his will, let it be done, and not mine.

3. I have learned and some way exercised patience, which is a continued submission and quiet obedience, and the constancy of the spirit, in not being shaken or moved or diverted with evil; and I have this lesson continually in my head, and therein have made some progress.

4. I am learning to read love in the greatest of evils,

evils, sin, desertions, afflictions, plagues of heart and disappointments; and to put good constructions on all God's dealings; and when any thing comes, tho' never so cross, I first enquire, what love can I see in this?

5. I am casting out and have cast out the bond-woman and her child out of my soul, I mean, the slavish spirit of fear, and the proud self-acting spirit, beating in daily evangelical principles in my head, so as now I find more faith and love in my actings.

6. I am drawing my heart to love the Lord Jesus, and to close with him with my whole heart, and to be content to live with him alone, shunning departing from him, and striving to beget and entertain familiar and kind thoughts of God in Christ, and to root out of my heart my strange and hard thoughts of him and of Christ.

7. I am making the world a stranger to me, daily meditating of such considerations as may mortify my heart thereunto, God furthering this enmity by providences, whereby I find the world my constant enemy, and am thereby made to hate and despise it, and to be carried with indignation against it.

8. I am studying sobriety in my affections, actings and carriage, in seeking after moderation, in not being much moved with any occurrence, studying always to be kept within bounds, and to be my own master.

9. I am taken up with observing of providences, especially in reference to myself, to see what God's ends may be in them, why they are sent, and what is suitable duty; but, above all, to see God in them, in his wisdom, holiness and love.

10. I am endeavouring to be profitable to
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thers, and what my generation-work is, and studying the right way of going about it.

11. I am helped to study and exercise thankfulness; the greatest help whereunto is, the consideration that all favours are from God, and so many pledges of heaven, and bought with the blood of Christ -

12. I am studying to know the glory of heaven, to be drawing all my consolations from this, and to be making it my treasure.

13. I am studying to make Christ my all, even *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*; and, in the want of all, to live in, and on, and from himself alone: these have been my exercises this while bygone, tho' beyond my intention.

Lastly, I learn dependence on God in outward straits, to recommend all things to him, to believe on him for deliverance, to be comforting myself from him; waiting for an outgate, and to be observing his hand in supporting under and delivering from manifold troubles: and to be from these experiences increasing in love and faith: and indeed I have found manifold experiences of late of outward deliverances; so that my life hath been a continual coming in and out of troubles, and every trouble seemed a remediless one till God freed me out of it.

SECT. IV.

Declaring my growth in grace as to some particulars.

COMparing my present condition with times past, notwithstanding of my complaints of unfruitfulness, yet I find these sensible growths in me;

1. I am helped to improve time, opportunities and occasions of doing and getting good better than formerly ; so that these occasions that were spent in vain-talking, sloth, ease and needless recreations, are now better improved to the glory of God, edifying of myself and others ; and these occasions are likewise more prized.

2. I find more sobriety and temperance. as to meat, drink, recreations and company, and greater strength against and hatred to sin, and a more violent resisting of it.

3. I find I have much increased, not only in a notional knowledge, but in an experimental knowledge of some necessary points ; which have had a powerful and blessed influence on my heart and conversation. I know more of God's nature and of Christ stamped on my heart, the covenant of grace, and faith, patience, duty, and the nature of sanctification, the deceits of Satan and wildness of my own heart, and my mistakes anent truths.

4. More diligence than formerly in prayer, meditation and reading of the scripture ; more hearty and frequent in them ; as likewise making more conscience of doing good to others, and pitying them more : much in extraordinary duties.

5. Faith discovered to act more vigorously than formerly, even against oppositions, being more purely grounded on the word in opposition to sense ; the grounds more strong than formerly, giving greater ease, and security, and strength and joy than before. ; as likewise more constantly and more strengthened to duties, and against objections and discouragements, insomuch that these doubts which before would have dung me off my feet, I am now helped thro' grace to withstand ;

stand; nay, to believe more strongly, so as there is no objection but I can say something to it.

6. I find more love to the Lord Jesus than formerly, a greater estimation of him, greater mourning for his absence; desiring and longing after him with more ardent desires, and a greater love and loveliness discovered in him than before.

7. Patience more in exercise than before.

8. More sober, grave, watchful, circumspect and spiritual in my conversation, which before was light, carnal and unprofitable, as it is in part yet.

9. More familiar knowledge of and acquaintance with God in Christ: better acquaintance with and more kindly uptakings of him; and more love seen in his person and providences than before.

10. Sorer exercised with inward and outward trials than formerly; gathering from the proportion of my burdens, hardness of my lessons, and difficulty in the work, the increase of strength and wisdom.

11. Audience of prayer made out more distinctly than formerly.

12. I find my enmity to, contempt and fear of the world increased.

13. More strength, wisdom and success in going about civil business; and of late the Lord's hand turned upon me, in taking off my burdens.

14. Under more serious and deeper apprehensions of the great things of the law, of sin, hell, heaven, eternity than formerly; more awakened and serious.

15. I have left off several sins which before I was subject unto; as drinking of healths, playing at cards, haunting without conscience ungodly company;

ry, gluttony, vain frothy discourse, light-
:sting, and neglect of duties.

I find a sensible mortification of pride, be-
re vile in mine own eyes, less seeking the
e of others in duties and words, more sub-
to cross dispensations, less contending and
; with others, but bearing infirmities, and
g them ; and more prizing of and thank-
for meaner and small mercies.

More spiritual and evangelical in working
rmerly, doing things now out of respect
command, relying more on his strength ;
:onfidence of being accepted, and more
ilness for acceptance.

I am helped to see and observe more of
id his ways than formerly, and to gather
:struction therefrom.

And, as I think, my gifts are increased, .
as to speaking : notwithstanding of late I
lecy in some things especially in diligence,
less and usefulness to others, being more
r ; and my wants and imperfections are so
ven in these same particulars, that I daily
fear, abhor, and humble myself under
nay, my wants are so great, my spots so
y sins so many, as oftentimes with fear
row of heart I say, hath God ever loved
h the love of his chosen ? doth the spirit
ist indeed dwell in me ? shall I indeed go
en ? and will Christ say, *well done, good
hful servant ?*

SECT. V.

Declaring the objective grounds of my doubting my conversion and actual interest in Christ, with the special and general answers thereto.

SINCE the time I knew any thing of God until this day, the tempter has not ceased to make me continually raze the foundations: and I find that it hath been his first and greatest drift to make me doubt of my conversion, by proposing of false marks, and making me to imagine grace to be another thing than indeed it was; and by inconsiderate reading of marks of sanctification given in good books, some of which I found afterwards not well cautioned; and by a confident asserting I was not converted: so that, for the space of three years after my real conversion, I not only doubted of my conversion, but believed that I was all the time rather in an unconverted state; but thought I was in the way, and had good hopes. But, the Lord making the fruits of sanctification to appear, I began to think otherwise, and in process of time to think rather I was converted, and to settle that as a conclusion, which tho' the devil cannot totally overturn, yet ceases he not to shake it; which by search I found out to be summed up in these twenty branches.

1st Ground. Because there was not such a distinct, long, orderly and deep work of preparation and humiliation at first conversion as I found described in practical books writing of the new birth. *Answer.* There was a work of the almighty power of Christ discovering sin and a natural condition as the greatest evils, which put me out to restless endeavours to come out of this; and I found

found the inability of myself and all duties to bring me out of this condition : and the Lord did by a marvellous light discover the Lord Jesus to me as the Saviour of sinners, and their full happiness ; and my heart immediately closed with him wholly and fully, which in its fruits hath continued to this day. 2dly, That tho' the substantials of conversion be observed generally amongst all, yet do not all persons cases agree as to the circumstantials of conversion, that is, as to the length, measure and manner of the spirit of bondage ; as is likewise clear from scripture. 3dly, The question is not so much how Christ came in, as if he be in : if ye find the fruits of holiness, it is well, tho' ye know not how they were sown or grown ; *the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation.*

2d Ground. My ordinary, uneven, unsettled, unprofitable way of walking with the Lord, the ordinary strayings and departings of my heart from God ; which unstableness in all my ways makes me fear double-mindedness, and to question whether my heart did ever find and see the exceeding evil of sin, seeing I so easily fall into it ; and how this can consist with the love of God that ought to be in the heart. *Answer.* Tho' I cannot deny these sins as to the matter, yet these considerations are suggested unto me as answer thereunto ; 1. They are not the spots of the world ; 2 Pet. ii. 20. they are as to their nature like the spots of his children ; they are unwatchfulness, shortcomings as to the heights of duty, idle words, fits of unbelief, carnality in the use of lawful comforts. 2. I bless God they are not the sins of the time ; I have been thro' grace kept from bowing of the knee to Baal : if I die in this wilderness, it is for my own sin, and not that I

have any part in the general conspiracy. 3. they interrupt not the Lord's kindness utter find that in my worst his *visitations uphold me* 4. Tho' the bush be burning, yet it is not med; the spark of spirital life that the Lord kindled remains still burning, yea, and increaseth for all these showers of sin that seek to quench it. 5. 'Tho' I have departed, yet not wickedly God: I sin neither deliberately, delightfully full consent, nor ly impenitently in my grief and mourn for them, and hate them I find sin on the decaying hand. 7. I find advantages by my sins; *peccare nocet, peccavi, juvat*. I may say, as Mr. Fox, my sins have done me more good than my grace and mercy hath abounded where sin hath abounded. I am made more humble, watchful, careful against myself, to see a greater need depend more upon him, to love him the more he continues such kindness to me notwithstanding my manifold provocations. I find that true Shepherd faith, *sin loses strength by every new*.

3d Ground. My fearful, dark, hellish ignorance and carnal conceptions of God, heaven and by which I am tempted to draw this conclusion that I am yet in darkness, and that that glorious light which discovereth Christ really as the glory of the Father, has not shined so clear and full; but that all my knowledge is either rational or notional, or natural: oh my unspeakable ignorance of him! to which, for satisfaction, I answer these things; (1.) That no man has seen God face to face, but in his Back-parts, with a very imperfect knowledge, Exod. xxxiii. 23. this was it that Moses saw. (2.) Saints see Christ through a glass, not immediately in this life, xiii. 12. (3.) And hence they see but dar-

mystery, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. (4.) The most cele-
 stial saints have much lamented their ignorance
 of God, Prov. xxx. 2. *I am more brutish than any
 and have not the understanding of the holy. O
 little a portion of him is known!* (5.) This is
 the effect of absence, and 'tis but a dark knowledge
 of one not present; 'tis in heaven we'll
 see to face, and know as we are known, and see
 him as he is, 1 John. iii. 3. (6.) *We walk by
 and not by sight,* 2 Cor. v. 7. seeing is our
 manner in heaven, not here. It is a controversy,
 whether the sight we have here of Christ be spe-
 cially different from what they have in heaven?
 It is considerable, Job xliii. 5. that, when
 he saw the Lord extraordinarily, he thought his
 former knowledge but a knowing God by the
 working of the ear; and yet, when Job knew but
 by the hearing of the ear, and not by the seeing
 with the eye, he was then a just man, that feared God,
 and shunned evil. (8.) I saw the Lord in glory
 with the eyes of my mind once extraordinarily,
 as I thought intuitively, the impression and
 effects of which remain to this day. (9.) I have
 perceived the real effects of saving knowledge: I
 find him in him; *they that know thy name will put their
 trust in thee,* Psal. ix. 10. It makes me prize and
 desire him, and long for him above all things,
 and mourn for his absence as the greatest evil,
 Job iv. 10. *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who
 hath asked water of thee, thou wouldst ask.* Tho'
 the Father be not seen in its cause, yet it is seen in
 its effects. (10.) Folk may really see and know
 God tho' they neither mind it nor know it, yea,
 they think they do not so, John xiv. 9. Phi-
 lip said to see the Father, as tho' he had never
 revealed to him; and yet Christ tells him he
 saw him, because he saw Christ. (11.) The Lord

faith, to execute judgement is to know the Lord. Our knowledge of God is better discovered in our obedience to him, than in our uptakings of him. (12.) *As herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us ; so herein is knowledge, not that we know him, but rather, as the apostle saith, Gal. iv. 3. are incum of him.* What shall I say, lastly, but, as Mr. Shepherd on the subject, " If ever the Lord hath revealed Christ to thee, thou wilt go mourning to the grave for want of him, and for thy ignorance of him so long ?" The Lord knows that it is the thing in the world I have most desired, to know God, and to see his glory.

4th Ground. That seldom hath there been a glorious, clear, distinct and full covenanting with God. Something I remember of the Lord's wooing of me ; and how can the Lord be mine, unless some marriage-day hath been ? And, whenever I have gone about this duty, how much heartlessness and confusion ? in trouble I have been, but not a distinct delivery. This objection is of the same nature with the first ; and therefore I answer, (1.) When the Lord first made me see a need of himself, and my misery in the want of him, and had wearied me of myself, I remember then he discovered the Lord Jesus in his loveliness ; and my soul, even my whole soul, was made fully and for evermore to close with him, and him only, and above all, and for all things : and this was the upshot of my tossings, so was it the seed of all good that ever followed, and I was made to express this much. (2.) As, in the preparatory work of humiliation, the Lord observes not the same method with all ; so, in the soul's closing with Christ, all do it not under the same distinct notion : some do it explicitly, and expressly subscribe with heart and hand that they are
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the Lord's, and swear fealty to him; some close with Christ implicitly and really, their heart elting to him and his ways, though they be not distinct and express in this; yea, some close with Christ, and are married to him, by and under the notion of believing on him with all their heart for all things, and so cast themselves on Christ; and this is covenanting, as covenanting is believing; and therefore faith is expressed under several notions and terms, according to the variety of mens apprehensions of it, and the several exercises of the soul in going out after and closing with Christ. Believing on Christ, and the will's liking of Christ, and personal covenanting with Christ are all one upon the matter, viz. the soul's union with Christ; the Lord is thine however, and thou art his. It is both a private and public solemn marriage; if once thou know any thing of it, look not for solemn marriages every day: hardly is the renewal of a covenant, which is frequent, so glorious and signal as the first marriage-day.

5th *Ground* is, not only the dim apprehensions, but the unkindly uptakings and conceivings of the Lord in Christ, as a strange God, and not under the kindly relation of a Father and friend, and husband; which breeds averfion to him, so as I cannot trust on him with my whole heart: and this makes me fear I am but under the relation of a servant, wanting the Spirit of adoption; and that I am yet but a stranger, and not drawn near to him in Christ, not a son. To which I answer these things; (1.) That however in the beginning there was ground for this complaint, yet that now there is no such cause, because that by serious meditation on Christ, on his offices, on his carriage towards sinners, and on his works of providence

providence towards myself both as to my spiritual and temporal condition, I have been helped to see the Lord, and uptake him under the kindly notion of a Father, yea, of my best and nearest friend, of my life, hope, health and light, *for I am a stranger on earth with God.* (2.) That howbeit many are sons indeed, and *have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear,* yet do they take to themselves this spirit again; and the Lord suffers this, that even his children be as servants, especially in the beginning, though they be lords of all; and that the bond-woman with her son be continued with the heir of the promise, Gal. iv. 1, 2, 24. (3.) That as no sin is perfectly healed in this life, so neither is the legal spirit of fear perfectly cast out; but, when love is perfect, it will cast out fear, 1 John iv. 18. and is daily casting it out. (4.) That as it is in children who know not distinctly their parents, but as strangers are afraid of them, yet have a secret instinct of nature, their heart warms, and cannot be kept away from them; so I have found with myself, when most under bondage and hardest apprehensions of God, that yet some kind of correspondence hath been kept up, and that I have mourned for his absence as under the greatest evil, could not be kept from him, was intimate and homely, though I had not such boldness and confidence to be heard.

6th Ground. Because I am tempted to think I have not been visited with special love, or the favour the Lord shews to his people; and that all my enlargements, visitations, light, change of heart, are but common mercies, no extraordinary thing: and what I can build on them? I answer, (1.) That though at first there appear little more than common mercies in them, yet have I by a

more narrow search found some special love and favour engraven upon them, as I purpose to show hereafter. (2.) What we meet with now are but the earnest of the bargain, and that is little in respect of the bargain itself; and it matters not whether the earnest be little or much, 2 Cor. v. 7. (3.) We should judge of the Lord's love rather by his sanctifying influences, humbling and strengthening the heart, than by his ravishing enjoyments and consolations: we see the dreadful end of such as boast much of that; it is the *adulterous generation that seeketh after such signs*. (4.) The way and manner of conveyance of mercies and spiritual visitations are rather to be looked to, than themselves. See if ye have them by prayer, if ye have them of free grace, if they represent, hold out and draw to God, and the Lord be stamped on them; not the gift, but the giver: this day of small things is not to be despised. (5.) The people of God are a poor and needy people, kept empty, have all their fulness in Christ, in the promise; and is to be revealed in heaven, where their treasure is. (6.) This is an evil time, a time of famine and beggary, in which it is good to be preserved from starving, and in which a little is worth twice as much as at another time*.

7th. *Ground.* That the mercies received come not in a gracious way, not as the answer of prayers, or as the result of my patient waiting, but as it were by chance, my mercies often times tryffing with my worst frame. To which I answer, (1.) I have prayed, mourned, waited, and hoped for mercies, though with much weakness and

* This was written in time of persecution; and thus are other passages also understood.

and imperfection : it is not the degree, but the nature, that is to be looked to. (2.) They are not the fruits of my prayers and endeavours; for there is more ground of loathing me for these, than rewarding me: but they are come in a better and more comfortable way, viz. by grace. The Lord tryts mercies with our indispositions, that grace may be seen. It is rather a sign of love than hatred, that grace is stamped on all favours and enjoyments; *Not unto us, but unto thy name.* It is better to hold mercies by this title. It is not fit that the Lord's love should be proportioned to our endeavours; where were grace then? *Not of works, lest any man should boast.* (3.) They draw to God.

8th Ground. The Lord carrying as a stranger and an enemy to me, crossing me in all my ways, not giving me my will, so that it would seem he were not my Father. To this I answer these things; (1.) That he causes grief, and shews wrath, yet not pure wrath; he *takes not his loving kindneses utterly away*; but they are *renewed every morning*: He shews much kindness in the midst of all his judgments. (2.) Our will, like children, is not our well; and it is a mercy to be crossed in this: God knows what is best for us. (3.) This is a time of wrath, a night; and what wonder if storms and darkness be? (4.) Ye see, saints have complained of this; *Why art thou unto me as an enemy?* Job saith, *Thou art cruel unto me.* (5.) Sense represents God falsely; it is to sense and fancy that God thus appears, not to faith: we should take other interpreters than sense. (6.) we should not look upon all things that may be trials as effects of wrath; God *bideth man from his purpose*, that he may *hide pride*, that the soul may be patient and humble, and exercise faith. (7.)
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It is utterly wrong that any thing without us should make us doubt our inward sincerity, seeing these are extrinsic to it; *no man knoweth love or hatred by any thing under the sun.*

9th Ground. That prayers are not directly and plainly answered. To this I answer, (1.) As in the former, that it is a thing without us, and so extrinsic to our sincerity. In this matter, regard is to be had rather to the manner of our prayers than to our answers. (2.) There is no fear, if ye pray in the name of Christ, in faith, in humility and sincerity, though they should not be answered. (3.) I have ever been helped in my extremity, in the *deep*, Psal. cxxx. 1. (4.) It is an ordinary complaint of saints, Psal. xxii. 1, 2. Lam. iii. 8. *He butteth out my prayer.* (5.) Prayers may be suspended, when they are not rejected, Luke xviii. 4, 7. (6.) There is no fear while ye continue in well-doing; for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not. Where God hath given a mouth and stomach, he will give meat. Your cause is in dependance, not overthrown; and it is good that ye get what will bear your expences till a decision be given. (7.) I find myself better and worse as I increase or decay in prayer; a token they are not altogether in vain. (8.) Prayers may be heard, and ye not know it, Hof. xi. 3. (9.) The answer of prayers is not ordinarily direct and plain in the terms of our petition, but indirect; we have not the same thing ye seek, but ye are answered equivalently in as good. (10.) I get promises renewed. (11.) It is like, when the Lord will build up Zion, there will be many answers dispatched. Now is a sowing time; hereafter is our harvest, and then all petitions shall be answered. (12.) After search, I found some petitions directly answered; and it is want of taking

ing up and considering our returns, or our own sloth, that hinders us from discerning our returns. Sometimes the Lord hears, and we are so prejudiced that we will not believe it, as in Job's case.

10th *Ground*. Want of compassion to, and deep apprehension of, the lamentable soul's case of my unconverted relations, and ignorant, profane formal neighbours; Oh it lies heavy on my spirits: do I believe therefore a hell or heaven, or that the ignorant or unconverted shall go to hell? I answer, 1. By confessing that there is great want of compassion and faith and seriousness in this, and that there is great deadness, Lord help it; for we believe, love and prophecy but in part only. 2. I mourn for this, and this deadness is loathsome and hateful to me. 3. I am yet helped, upon occasional views of their condition, to have my sorrow stirred, and to be earnest for them with the Lord, yea, and to pour forth tears and sighs of grief for them, and to find my compassion sensibly stirred.

11th *Ground* is a constant indisposition of spirit to all manner of duties, unwillingness to enter to them, wearied and heartless in them, and glad when they are done; so that I fear there is not a new nature which delights in the law of God. To which I answer these things; 1. That as there is a regenerate and unregenerate part in every believer, which is continually opposite to that which is good; so this indisposition doth proceed from the unregenerate part, in which no good thing dwelleth, Rom. vii. 8. and this should make us question our state no more than the being of a body of death. 2. That I find something in me that mourns under this, which esteems, approves, and sees a glory and delight in the law of the Lord,

, Rom. vii. 22 *The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.* 3. That therefore I am not so much tied of the duty (which I love) but of my own art in the duty: as a loving son, that hath a good foot, is willing to run his father's errand, glad to be employed, and yet the sore foot is the journey a burden; there is a thorn in the flesh: an unsound heart's opposition is to the self: hypocrites love not all duties.

4th Ground. Because I found not a full resolution to obey some difficult commands, such as to stand and free reproof, especially of great folk; to deal with my acquaintances as to their faults: which makes me think I am not universal in my obedience; and that I am but partial in obedience. To this I answer these things, that though I exceedingly fail in the manner, being heartless, general, and having base ends, altogether respecting the good of the party I am with; yet, through grace I win to do the best as to the matter and substance of it. 2. That, when I do it, I find I do it not only to ease my conscience, but out of respect to the command of

3. That I prize, love, esteem and have resolution to this duty, and my heart would be at it; I am straitened and in pain till I discharge it. I prove that *the law is holy.* 4. I pray, mourn, rebuke myself under my failings in this, and fetch it to Christ; and it is strange to me that sin, for which I groan to the Lord Jesus delivered from it, should or can damn me. The Lord's controversy: *Wilt thou not be made perfect?* 5. It is through accident that those duties are omitted, through my natural bashful temper. I cannot do a thing willingly, but is in bonds he cannot get it done; I find that, *when I will do good, evil is present.* 6. There is not a

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full conviction of the duty, but especially of the way and manner how it should be performed. *how to do I know not.*

13th Ground. That I am not so taken with heaven, in longing after it, delighting and rejoicing in the expectations thereof; & therefore, my heart not being there, it is likely it is not my treasure. To which I answer, 1. Look, as Philip said to Christ, *Shew us the Father, and it will suffice us*; Christ answers, *you have known him, because he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*: So I say that desires and mourns after Christ, mourns for sin, and desires to be holy, loves the fellowship of God's people, doth really love and long for heaven; for what is heaven but the enjoyment of Christ, and conformity to him, though I have no more clear and distinct notion? 2. My unwillingness to go to heaven doth proceed from a desire to do some service for Christ e'er I went: I suspect some of my work I suspect is yet undone. 3. My going doth proceed from a want of a full assurance of future happiness, and some fears; for I love this world. 4. I find myself of late more distinctly clear in my longings after, and joyful expectations of heaven, and my heart more heavenly minded.

14th Ground. That I grow not, nor improve; nor am I throughing any work, but in one manner. I answer, 1. That there may be growth in grace, yet it appears not always sensibly, but grows as a seed of corn, which a man knows not; it *comes not with observation*. 2. Notwithstanding of remaining evils, yet I find a remarkable growth, though not in the number of graces, yet as to the nature and purity; I have made better work, though not so much of it, as I did before.

ds; I grow downward, if not upward: found a growth in faith, in love, in patience, humility; dying to the world and myself-righteousness, and living unto God: in that which I propose to myself therewith. Yea, 4. There is an expediency, necessity, of pulling down a certain kind of righteousness; and hence a man shall find worse than before, e'er ever the righteousness be set up.

Ground. Because I find such an evil in me, such blindness, hardness of heart, pride and other sins, and in such an ease, that I say, Did ever the Lord reheart? I answer; 1. *In me, that is, in dwelleth no good thing*; and as to my unpart, I am *carnal, and sold under sin*. Therefore death in all. 2. As I find this in myself do I find a new man, that knows, de- the Lord and his ways, and continually I opposes this body of death.

Ground. That I enjoy not the Lord him- dinances, in public or private prayer, in of the word or reading thereof, or meditation: there is not that special p with the Lord himself, nor the glory of Christ found and seen; some light gth, but little or none of God. To this

1. That I really desire and love the rist above any thing, and mourn for him, and come to ordinances for himself, nsatisfied with any thing, though never is, if it fetch not nor reveal a Christ to

I love every thing for his cause mostly; takes every mercy sweet to me, that it om the Lord. 2. Altho' thro' mine own l unbelief, and because of an evil time

and day of wrath, there are not such full visions of God ; yet have I found ord and duties, and works of providence, revealing of the Lord himself, and of his greatness, so as my soul hath been drawn to the Lord himself thereby, and to love, and adore, and delight in him the more. I have found the ordinances and means (not sensibly nor presently, yet) in process bringing forth real fruits of holiness, so : reason to bless the Lord for such occasions : as my body is really (though not sensibly) refreshed by meat and drink. However, this deserves a more serious consideration.

17th *Ground*. That my thoughts of hell, and of heaven, do not beget such impressions upon my soul. I tremble not at death and hell ; I am not rejoicing in glory ; and this makes me think my knowledge and faith is but dead and lifeless. To this answer, 1. That though in my sensitive faculty I have not these impressions of joy and fear, yet I find them in my estimative apprehensive faculty, so as I really judge sin to be the greatest evil, and am really most troubled with it ; and I prize Christ, his grace and holiness, to be the greatest good. A man is more pained, troubled, and cries out more for a boil on his finger, than he doth when he knoweth he hath a hectic fever or consumption ; and yet he judges the one a greater evil than the other. There is more fear and grief in the damnable sin, than in any faint ; and a soul newly converted and drawn to the ways of God, with all of Christ's love, hath more sensible joy than a grown assured Christian. Grace goes not without sensible impressions on the affections, or r

the sensitive faculty or appetite, which outward and sensible objects do elevate. 2. Saints have found and lamented this distemper as it is such, and yet have not quit their interest, *Isai. lxiii. 17. Why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear?* And hence David and the church do cry frequently for quickening; *Quicken us, O Lord, and we will call on thy name.* 3. Baxter saith well, "Hardness of heart is more in the will and practice than in the sensitive faculty;" as is easily proven by Scripture. Disobedience is hardness of heart in Scripture.

18th Ground is from my spiritual pride, which streams itself through all my actions, even my most spiritual: and hence I find, that I resolve to be holy, to get an esteem, not from men, but from conscience; I mourn for sin as it is a weakness, and as it is contrary to my design and resolutions: yea, though I find an insufficiency in duties to save me: and so of necessity made to flee to another; yet do I find my heart secretly wishing that it were otherwise, that life were to be had through our own works; and this makes me secretly desire and endeavour to do something on earth that might be a part of my crown in heaven: and I found a despising of the glory revealed in heaven, if freely given, and no way merited; so that I am by this put to question whether ever I was dead to the law or not. To which I answer, omitting what may be answered to this by what hath been said, I satisfy myself with this, That as I find a spirit of self and pride acting, so do I find a spirit of humility loathing myself for this my pride, and a secret contentedness in breaking my resolutions even when they were good, because self was thereby debased, and the counsel of the Lord did stand; yea, and I find,

19th *Ground*. I find such instability in my ways, such unequal steps betwixt the Lord & idols, that I fear my whole heart is not con- Lord ; I am not his only. Oh the one ho- united heart, the conjugal heart ! but alas parted betwixt the Lord & idols ; and I fo- delight in the Lord, and sometimes in n- and worldly contentment, 2 Kings xvii. 3 ; served the Lord, and they served their i- answer, 1st, No man ever closed so fu- Christ, or had such a conjugal love, but h- inclinations to idols, by reason of the ur- rate part. Our union of faith and love perfect, as well as any other grace ; the- nerate carnal part cries still for, and wou- its lovers. In heaven our affections : wholly for the Lord. 2dly, The renew- is for the Lord wholly and only, and g- consent to what the flesh doth, but is led- and sighs under the bondage, and cries on

and my rule and the former practice of saints, I cannot conceive how I can go to heaven, how the just Lord will give heaven to such an unprofitable servant; Will ever Christ say to me, *Well done, good and faithful servant?* But for this I answer these things; 1st, Heaven is not promised to the degree or measure of grace, but to the nature of it; the Lord accepts mites, cups of cold water, grains of mustard-seed; he will not quench smoking flax: I do service, though I cannot weigh it in measure. 2dly, Such is the condescendency and lovely nature of Christ, that he will crown these duties we are ashamed to own. Christ counts and prizes saints duties more than any thing else in the world; *Ye visited me, fed me, gave me drink. When saw we thee hungry or naked? In that ye did it to one of these little ones, ye did it to me.* It is Christ's gracious property, he is soon pleased, and his yoke is easy. Parents are wonderfully taken up with the poorest and simplest action or speeches of their children. There is a fatherly love in Christ. 3dly, Heaven comes by grace, by Christ's blood, and not by works; works are not your title to glory. *No law-music* (saith Rutherford) *in heaven: No; Worthy is the Lamb.* Look not to what thou hast done, but to what Christ hath done; ye neither share in whole or in part with Christ: Good works are mentioned, not to buy or purchase glory by, but to evidence an interest in Christ, and sincerity in grace; if there be as much as will evidence sincerity, there is enough: the least gold is gold, as well as the greatest piece.

As for these general answers I promised; because these are included in the special answers given to the special objections, and in respect I am in the next section to go over some things relating

relating to the same purpose, I shall not mention them.

SECT. VI.

Declaring my evidences of regeneration and heaven.

1. **A** Continued prizing and esteeming, and love of, and desire and mourning for, and longing after God in Christ above all things; above gifts, fairs, duties, graces and joys; and this wrought of new in my soul by an almighty power. *I love them that love me.* 1 Pet. ii. 7. *to you that believe, Christ is precious.*

2dly, Real and fervent love to the saints, yea all saints, and because such; with a contempt and hatred of others. I prize, esteem and delight in the fellowship of saints, above what I have to my nearest relations; and by this I gather that I am translated from death to life, and shall one day reign with them, 1 John iii. 14.

3dly, I am in heart engaged to the Lord Jesus his service, accounting it most glorious; and am desiring and accounting it as my greatest mercy to be employed for him, and mourning for my unprofitableness, and great loss Christ is at with me, as the greatest evil, 1 John iii. 10. John xv. 14. and have been afflicted to do so in some measure; and that my shortcomings have proceeded from ignorance and unbelief.

4thly, Because that when, thro' the violence of temptations and suggestions, my fears do arise, and then go and stayedly and diligently examine myself according to the scriptures, and submit it to their determination, I find my condition and case good, and am made to hope; and if the word absolve, who can condemn? Psal. xvi.

13. Isa viii. 20. Rom. ii. 2. The judgement of God is according to truth.

5thly, Because, when by the power of temptations and unbelief I conclude or apprehend I am unregenerate, I find much evil thereby, and these conclusions like poison utterly to wrong my soul; and my heart drawn from God, and utterly weakened to duty: whereas, I concluding my state gracious, I find my heart enlarged, God's countenance shining upon me, hatred to sin, and strength to go about duty; which I look upon as the Lord's sealing these conclusions.

6thly, Because that the Lord by his mighty power, answering all my objections clearly and fully, with much pains, hath made me believe on the Lord Jesus, and come to him, not only for peace and comfort, but likewise mainly for himself, and for sanctification; for removal, not of some sins only, but of all sin; and, above all, for delivery from my wicked nature; esteeming really conformity to and enjoyment of God the greatest mercy, and a natural condition the sorest evil, by which I distinguish my faith from hypocrites, Hof. xiv. 2. Micah iii. 11.

7thly, Because my love, faith, patience and obedience have been tried by the winds and storms of temptations, especially inward; and yet, thro' the strength of Christ, my bow hath not broken, but he hath increased my strength; by which I am made to think I am built on the rock, Luke vi. 48.

8thly, Because I have found the Lord, when he was drawing me to himself, observe the same way which he uses to draw his own to himself: for I have found that he hath discovered my undone condition by nature, my distance with and enmity to God, and my wildness; he hath affected

ted me with this, as the greatest evil ; he hath discovered my inability to help myself, discovered to me my heart-pollutions, the insufficiency of duties ; wearied and loaded me with my heart and ways, so as I utterly despaired of myself and ways, only hoping in the Lord secretly : and now, while undone, and acknowledging the Lord's righteousness, I have by many wonderful providences, great and continued pains, been made with much ado, and over the belly of all objections, to come to Christ, and to believe on him for up-making all my wants, especially the want of himself ; and have received his promise upon this, which hath satisfied me, and given rest to my wearied soul ; so that now I find his word my abiding security, and the Lord my light, strength, consolation and glory : and being thus made by an omnipotent power to come to himself by the warrant and in the authority of his word, and that for all things, I do expect he will not cast me off, nor cast off the work of his hands ; but, being called, will likewise be *justified and glorified*, John vi. 37. Rom. viii. 30.

9thly, I find a real, inward, universal and abiding change from darkness to light, from sin and Satan to God and his ways, wrought by a great power ; and can remember how, and by what means, and when it was wrought ; and how the Lord daily perfects it : by which change I am differenced from the rest of the world, and from what I was myself before conversion, and from all hypocrites in the world ; by which change, and that all things are new, I gather I am in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 17. Eph. iv. 22, 23, 24.

10thly, Because, comparing myself, exercises of spirit, properties and sins, with the saints in scripture, I find them answer to one another as *face doth to face* : I find them complain of the same

same evils and distempers I complain of ; and, in condemning myself, I must likewise condemn them, *and so offend the generation of the righteous.* And, when I pass hasty conclusions against myself, I next say, is there any that hath grace? and so, being like them and of them, I think I will share alike with them at last.

11thly, A sensible growth in humility, knowledge, sobriety, faith, patience, love to Christ, leadness to the world, and repentance ; whereas hypocrites fall away : and therefore think that the good work is begun, seeing the Lord is daily perfecting it, Philp. i. 6. and this shews it to be a fountain *springing up to everlasting life*, seeing it is not dried up, John iv. 14.

12thly, An universal respect to all commands, hatred to all sins : which is kythed in my loving every one of these commands, endeavouring to do every one of them, seeing a glory in every one of them ; and mourning for all omissions, tho' thro' ignorance and infirmity I win not up to do them, Luke i. 6. Psal. cxix. 6.

13thly, I find, by diligent examination of myself according to the scriptures, a clear difference betwixt all my graces and such as I have seen or read to be in hypocrites ; and tho' I think I come behind all saints, yet find in me what is not in any hypocrite, Mat. v. 20. *except your righteousness exceed, &c.*

14thly, That my works, obedience, and exercise of grace, come continually thro' faith, and from gospel-principles, rather than from legal motives ; and that the consideration of honouring Christ doth draw me more strongly to my duty than any other motive whatsoever of benefit ; which I look upon as the filial spirit, and spirit of love given to sons, Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 6.

2 Cor. i. 22. 2 Tim. i. 17. so that, as Isaac the son of the promise, I can do nothing but thro' faith, and out of sense of his love and strength, Gal. iv. 28.

15thly, That I am not satisfied with any measure of grace, or length in duty, or communion with God, but evermore desire more; which shews to me that it is desired for itself, and not for its effects, seeing the least measure of grace will bring to heaven. This was Paul's spirit, Philip. iii. 11, 12, 13. 1 Cor. xv. 57.

16thly, Because I find true poverty of spirit, and find a wildness in my best works, and mourn over my best performances, wondering that ever the Lord Jesus should respect them; glorying only in the Lord Jesus, Mat. v. 3. Isa. lxvi. 2. hypocrites are never emptied of themselves.

17thly, I find a hatred, loathing of, and mourning for all sins of omission as well as commission, sins of others as well as mine own sins, secret sins and little sins as well as great sins, and gospel-sins above all sins; looking on sin as the greatest evil, Mat. v. 4.

18thly, Self-loathing, and contented submission to the Lord in hardest dispensations, because it is the will of God; and accepting the punishment of sin, Job i. hypocrites murmur when tried, and in their heart curse God: this was the trial of Job's sincerity; if he had been an hypocrite, he would have cursed God either in heart or mouth.

19thly, Because, in reading of the scriptures, there is nothing that the Lord's spirit so applies, and takes to my heart, as encouragements, and promises and persuasions to do good unto others, and patience and faith; and to be of good cheer, for God will not speak peace to the wicked, Isa.

lvii. 21. and iii. 10. Say to the righteous, it shall be well with them.

20thly, I find that, in all evils that befall me, I am never suffered to put an ill construction upon them; and a spirit secretly suggesting to me that it is for good, so as my heart is no way more sanctified than by this, *Rom. viii. 15.* and this I look upon as the Spirit's witness.

21stly, That I never commit a fault, little or great, but it is corrected, *Amos iii. 2. You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities:* and this I look upon as a fatherly kindness; nay, that which he suffers in others, he reproves in me.

22dly, The Lord by all dispensations is wearying my soul of the world, putting enmity betwixt me and the world more and more; whereby I gather that I am not of the world.

23dly, The Lord's constant following me with manifold kindnesses and love, in strengthening, comforting, quickning, supporting, visiting and delivering me, being with me always in all my ways, never leaving me, doing me always good, bearing with all my infirmities: I find the Lord's providence one constant tract of kindness, bearing me in his arms as an eagle doth her young, by all means commending himself to me; because he loved first, I am loved to the end. How shall I know a father's heart, but by his fatherly dealing towards me? *John xiii. 1.*

24thly, I have by observation found, that every thing works for good to me, the Lord doing good to me by sins, desertions, temptations and afflictions. The end hath been a discovery of the Lord's kindness in supporting and comforting me when troubled, and delivering me out of it, *which hath drawn my love and confidence to him;*

him; by these hath he kept me waking, and tried, exercised, and increased any good in me. All his ways have I found mercy and truth, Psa. xxv. 10. Rom. viii. 28.

25thly, I have seen grace stamped on all my mercies: as they come of grace, so I am made to see them all flowing in this channel. It is the elect that are saved by grace; the *children of the promise*.

26thly, When I have been several times in anguish of spirit by reason of doubting of my interest, the Lord Jesus hath come and spoken to my soul in the gospel, and told me he was reconciled to me; desired me not to fear; that he would do all things for me that I wanted; commanded me to believe; gave me grounds and reasons for believing; and overcame me, and made me believe. And hath he promised, and will he not fulfil it? my hopes are built on the promise of God; *he cannot deny himself*.

27thly, I remark a special hand of God in all my deliverances. In a word, he lets none do me good but himself; a token that he is my Lord. Who is it that cares for the children, and provides for the wife, but the husband and father?

SECT. VII.

Declaring some practical considerations and instructions which the Lord taught, and by which I attained to settling and peace as to my interest in Christ, and through which mists, doubts, and fears, were driven away.

I have been for a long time after the Lord had indeed shewn kindness to me kept under by a spirit of bondage, through fears and doubts, and mistakes,

mistakes, under which I have groaned for several years after my first conversion, thro' manifold sins and temptations; which did not only take away my peace, but did me much prejudice otherwise: But in process of time the Lord did dispel these mists and fears, and by his word and spirit of wisdom made me see things freely given me of God, establishing my heart: He discovered my mistakes, so as now I believe rather that I am converted, and my way and day is lightsome. The means and considerations were,

1. That there may be grace in the soul really, though it appear not gloriously unto the soul. *Our life is hid in Christ*, Col. iii. 3. *and we know not what we shall be*, 1 John iii. 2. There is indeed a marvellous glory in grace and the spirit of holiness, but it is sullied with corruption; and our eyes are dim, and cannot see this glory but darkly: This is the rust and dross that is in and upon this glorious metal. We are now *lying among the pots*; *I am black*, saith the spouse. Our graces discover themselves by their effects rather than by themselves, as a little smothered fire doth by the smoke; hence, say not there is no grace, because ye see not the glory of it.

2. The Lord made me consider and know, that however where there is one grace, there are all graces as to their being; yet are not all graces exercised when one is. The exercise of one grace, proceeding from life, shews that all graces are there, tho' the life of grace stream not nor vent itself, in all actions; and therefore, when we see grace stopt one way, it ordinarily breaks out in another. Love cannot delight in God when he is away, because the object of delight must be present; but love vents itself in sorrow for want of, and ardent desires after, the beloved object.

I cannot get this and that done, saith the soul; but grace vents itself another way, to wit, in mourning and self-lothing: and we see this frequently in scripture, that there is ordinarily but one grace exercised, or two at one time; seldom do we see the ship with all her sails up. Think not therefore the gracious exercises of thy spirit, delusions or common work, when thou canst not exercise all graces.

3. That grace and corruption are not to be looked upon in their actings on the sensitive and passionate faculties, so much as on the mind and will; for the strength of sin is there. Rom. vii. 21. Paul distinguished the law in his members, and the law of his mind. I thought, and so do many still, that hardness of heart was want of horrors, great fears and terrors upon the spirit; but, by looking into the scriptures, I see it consists more in the rebellion of the will and understanding. Mark vi. 52. it is said of the Disciples, *that they did not believe, for their hearts were hardened*. Pharaoh's hardness of heart did consist in the disobedience of his will. Gross objects and novelties have much influence on the sensitive faculties; therefore there is no ground to fear, tho', 1st, We cannot tear nor be tormented with horror for sin; tho' we find not so passionate desires after God, and so sensible as we do feel in the stomachs when we are hungry, or after an outward object. 2dly, See what may be the cause why there is more tenderness at first conversion than afterwards. 3dly, Learn hence to judge of the graciousness of your spirits by the manner ye resolve in, more than by the executions of your resolutions: the frame of the heart in resolving should be more looked unto, than in doing; for the outward court is given unto the Gentiles. Look to your estimations, love, desires, will, purposes, rather than to any other thing.

4. True evangelical repentance consists rather in a sweet melting of heart for sin and loathing and forsaking of it, than in a fearful sensible apprehension of wrath and horror; for *perfect love casteth out fear*. And the humiliation which God requires is, *to break the bands of wickedness*, Isa. lviii. 6. otherwise the damned should have most repentance; 2 Cor. vii. 10. *Godly sorrow worketh not death*. Do not think thou wants repentance, tho' thou want horror.

5. That the spirit of bondage and horrors and law-work did in themselves produce evil effects, weakened the hands; drove from the Lord, and were evil in themselves, and contrary to the commands of God; *fear not, cast out the bond-woman; contrary to Christ's ends, these things have I spoken that ye might have peace; contrary to Christ's allowance, ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear*: and therefore desire not a law-work or horrors, much less think not yourself not sincere tho' ye want it and are kindly dealt with, but be rather thankful. It is true, the Lord by accidents doth good by this legal spirit. It is well distinguished by one; who distinguishes betwixt the event of a thing, and the effect of a thing.

6. There may be sincerity in the heart, and love to God, when the Lord heareth not prayer, hides his face, and frowns, afflicts and crosses and smites in all the labour of the hand: we see, saints complained of this before. The Father is still a Father when he chastises, yea, will chastise because he is a Father, Amos iii. 2. Be more holy, and please God, and he will be a Father to you. These may be trials; when thou therefore finds these things, conclude not that the Lord is thine enemy,

7. The quality, and nature, and sincerity of actions and graces, are rather to be looked into than

than the measure. Christ notices the widow's mite, and cup of cold water, and the grain of mustard-seed. Consider not then how much, as what : grace and mercy here. is but the earnest of glory. You will not question the bargain because of the quantity of the earnest. Be then thankful and rejoice in little mercies ; the Lord's people are a poor and needy people. Hast thou love, faith, humility, or knowledge ? then question not your state, tho' they run low.

8. By powerfully perswading me that it is the duty of all to believe on Christ, to come to him ; yea, both good and bad, humbled and unhumbled, are to rest on him. It is true, none will believe but humbled sinners ; and therefore are ministers bound to shew them their misery, that they may seek to the physician : but it is the duty of all to believe ; it is a moral duty that glorifies God, enjoined to the ignorant Jews, John vi. 28, 29. and the wicked are damned for want of this. And therefore, tho' I find not these qualifications in me, I am not to stay away from Christ, but rather to come ; for Christ as a Saviour is declared to save sinners immediately. Tho' unhumbled, yet it is thy duty to believe, as well as to sanctify a sabbath.

9. Evils, such as afflictions, desertions, temptations, sins, plagues of heart, tho' in themselves they be evil, yet are in their end and destination from love and for good. The physician doth not hate because he makes the patient sick, nor doth the parent abhor because he correcteth. Hag. ii. 17. *smiting in all the labour of the hands* is, that they may turn. Hos. v. 15. the Lord's leaving of a land, and hiding of his face, is, that they may acknowledge their iniquities : the rod is, *Isa. xxvii. 9. to purge away sin.* The messenger indeed

indeed is hard-favoured and unpleasant to behold, but he hath a love-letter from God, and a sweet message; God therefore may love me, tho' I be trysted with these evils.

10. Prayers unanswered are not a sign of hatred. God hears, accepts and loves the prayer, which he presently, to sense, directly answers not. 1st, The beloved people of God complained of this. 2dly, Unnecessary and needless petitions are only denied, such as great measures of grace, extraordinary raptures. 3dly, we ask what is not good for us; God will not give a knife to cut our hands. 4thly, God never denies his people without a reason, and sometimes shews the reason, 2 Cor. xii. 8, 9. 5thly, God answers materially and equivalently, tho' not in our way, fancy and notion. 6thly, Christ's answers are oftentimes mysterious, and we uptake them not; when he really answers, it is we that hear not, because Christ opens his mouth in dark sayings. 7thly, They are but suspended and not rejected, and shall be answered. 8thly, Thou art the better of prayer, it is blessed to thee: what though thou get not what thou goest to court for? yet the Lord gives thee what bears thy charges coming and going, and bids thee come again. 9thly, Thou gets a promise of answer.

11. The love of God to a soul doth vent itself more in humbling, strengthening and sanctifying the soul, than in comforting it with extraordinary raptures: they are not the strongest nor the best-beloved christians, whose sense is most indulged; *blest are they who see not, and believe.* Believing Mary is prohibited to touch Christ, and unbelieving Thomas is commanded to put his hands

his side. I have seen some, that have had great raptures of joy, prove but stark naught.

The

The greatest mercy is holiness, and grace to honour him; if God bestow that, doubt not of his love, he will come again in heaven, and vent his love to thee.

12. The love of God doth vent itself to a gracious soul; not always in the channel which the soul cuts out to it to run in; it vents itself under any trouble, rather in supporting and comforting the soul under trouble, than in removing it. When the bush burns, the Lord's love manifest itself, not in quenching the fire altogether, but in keeping the bush unconsumed. Rejoice therefore, if comforted, supported and sanctified under trouble, tho' not delivered from it.

13. Our happiness, and Christ's love to us doth appear and is more in the promise, in himself, and by what he will give, than by what saints have received or presently feel. *Our life is hid with Christ; and we know not what we shall be.* We have now but the earnest; *ear hath not heard, eye hath not seen what is prepared.* Here is sorrow, labour, pain and wants. Ye will never love Christ, nor rejoice in your portion, if you look not above your receivings, to what you have in heaven; *fear not, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.*

14. A gracious frame doth not always last. True grace as to the being never perishes, though as to the disposition and exercise it may and doth. When the Lord hath visited a soul, and made the heart tender, and shined upon it, and then drawn a vail, and the soul finding itself dead and heartless, it secretly thinketh all that it had formerly to be delusions, and so is unthankful and discouraged; why? because it is perished, and so at best it is but common: but a thing may remain in its root (*his seed abideth in him.*) tho' it

es fall; yea, it must be so, that thou mightest
 air to the fountain, Christ, to fill thy empty
 tles in; see it in saints; *all flesh is grass*. The
 it ye eat in the morning will not serve at night.

5. By considering that the Lord, and his
 ce, mercy and truth, is the ground of our
 e, rejoicing and glorying, our life, our light
 . consolation; he is the *confidence of all the ends*
be earth, 1 Cor. i 31. Therefore our sins or
 rtcomings, weakness, blindness, should not
 ourage us, or make us doubt of heaven, or a-
 mercy; because our title is not founded on
 se, but on the Lord Jesus himself, and our
 es should be proportioned to the grounds of
 hope. *In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting*
ngth, therefore is there never ground of doubt.

3.
 6. As Christ in the days of his flesh, and ap-
 rance in the world, *was growing up as a plant*
of a dry ground and and that his kingdom came
with observation; so may the Lord come quiet-
 without noise or din into a soul, and they not
 ow it. It is a mistake to think, as many do,
 it when this Lord Jesus and King of glory shall
 ne to the soul, that heaven shall be as it were
 ened, and some glorious rapture, as the Jews
 l dream of his outward coming; no; he may
 me to the soul in a very poor and despicable
 addition, and ordinarily he is in the still small
 ice. Think not therefore that Christ came
 t to thy soul, because thou hast not seen him in
 mp and glory.

17. The Lord's dealings and method with o-
 rs are not our rule. It is a cause of much
 ubting and disquietness, that persons reading
 attentively in books the Lord's way to others,
 nce they cut out this chanel to themselves, and
 think,

and yet moves in that way thou cannot see

18. By making me consider and consider, that there is flesh and an unregenerate which inclineth to all evil, and leadeth to death, as well as there is a new man : as be not disquieted, as many are, tho' ye have malice, pride, and opposition to every good ; if thou find a renewed part fighting against loathing thyself for, and mourning under ; cast the saddle on the right horse ; attribute evil to the flesh, and thy good to the

19. Times should be distinguished. I see ye see neither leaves nor fruit on the tree wonder not : this is a winter, a day of winter and therefore, tho' the Lord never withdraweth from his people, yet are there certain seasons when the saints life and glory may be in the night ; is a day of famine, and of wrath and death to the unrighteous *bring forth fruit in their season*

20. Faith is the most profitable duty

s to be tried by Scripture ; and if according to
 he Scripture ye be found sincere, then let books,
 suggestions and all say what they will. And truly
 most mens fears and doubts proceed from mis-
 taken marks given in books, or dumb suggestions :
 think ; but saith the Scripture so ? Isai. viii.
 10.

22. Look not so much on the beginning of
 a Christian's life or exercise, as to the end ; God's
 dealings begin with tragedies, and end in come-
 dies : the Lord will *do thee good in thy latter end ;*
the latter end of that man is peace.

SECT. VIII.

*Containing general and special rules for ordering my
 speech, behaviour and practice.*

THE Lord's people walk by rule ; their life is
 fitly compared, Heb. xii. 1. to a race ; and
 I have therefore thought upon some general rules
 to be observed as the foundation of all true reli-
 gion.

General Rules.

1st Rule. Labour to know and find out where-
 in a man's chief happiness doth consist : have an
 end to follow ; till a man intend right, he can never
 have a right motion. Fix the heart in the belief
 of this, that the enjoyment of God in Christ is
 our happiness ; and make the heart to close with
 his. Alas ! the most of us walk at random, like
 beasts, without an end. This is the foundation
 of all, John xvii. 3. *It is eternal life to know God,*
and him whom he hath sent.

2d Rule. It will much contribute to our mo-
 tion in the way, to be armed with a strong and
 deliberate resolution to walk in such ways ; this
 will

3d Rule. Labour to have and keep right orthodox and charitable thoughts of God, lovely character of God in thy heart, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. Fix the faith of God, study this most; *This is life eternal* x. 14. *How shall they call on him whom they know not?* It is a superstitious unprofitable that is not to the true God.

4th Rule. Be always in duty; racers n the gate: never be idle. As there is an there is a way; never sit still. Lay it a dation, to be always in duty; never to q whatever be, 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Always abo the work of the Lord.* Job xlvii. 9. *The holdeth on in his way.* We by idleness lose we are employed in such a work as we suffer to grow cold. Oh our interruption much prejudice! Little and little make speed at last.

5th Rule. Walk by faith and not by sight.

hoping always stedfastly unto the end. *Trust in him at all times, ye people.* Heb. iii. 6. *Hold fast your confidence stedfast unto the end.* No ground ever for despair, the ground of faith remains alway: therefore never lose your hope; *It is good for a man to hope,* Lam. iii. 26. *Isai. xxvi. 4.*

7th Rule. Live near the Lord always; that which is expressed in Scripture by *walking with God, setting him always at our right-hand.* Let heart, thoughts and affections retain ever some impressions of his presence; fear always: Keep yourselves in the love of God; if departed, return again; if returned, keep with him. All good is with God, and all ill comes from his absence and distance; *Wo unto them when I leave them.* Lose not your guide by any means, he is all things, life, light, strength and health: Ye cannot be without this, *Hos. xii. 6. Wait continually on thy God.* Psalm xvi. 8. *Gen. xvii. 1. John xv. 4, 5, 6. Without me ye can do nothing.* Psal. lxxiii. 23. *It is good for me to draw near to God.*

8th Rule. Be always humble; never murmur; be always vile in thine own eyes; justify the Lord always; submit to every dispensation; let never your spirits be rankled or fired, *Micah vi. 8. Walk humbly with thy God.*

9th Rule. Keep your spirits sober and in health; if sick and distempered, ye can not travel: Not drunken with the *Cares of this world,* Luke xii. 45. Be not lifted up with pride or passion; he whose spirit is lifted up within him, is not right. Keep your spirits in an equal balance, *1. Pet. v. 8. Be sober;* suffer not your passions to run to excess: Sober in weeping, rejoicing, speaking, doing, fearing, *Phil. iv. 5. 1 Cor. vii. 30. Be always master of thyself; unshaken.*

10th Rule. Study temperance, this is objective
X
sobriety,

fobriety; temperance in meat, drink, sleep recreations. Shun excess, by which the 1 are indisposed. The Heathen call temperance ground-work and foundation of all virtue. : i 5, 6 Prov. xxiii 20. Racers must be c and temperate, 1 Cor. ix. 25. *He that w must be temperate in all things.* Surfeiting is bidden, Luke xxi. 34.

11th Rule. Beware of worldly-mindedness being too much engaged in the world; *H warreth doth not entangle himself in the affairs life,* 2 Tim. ii. 4. Have as little ado in the as ye can; take no more in hand than ye are able to master: if engaged, flee as a bird the snare, and put thy house in order, b the world out of thy heart especially; *N can serve two masters.*

12th Rule. Be watchful: Beware of a sleep slumber, stand always on your guard; *W all things,* as the apostle commanded Tim *Blessed is the man that feareth always.* Be suspicious, Prov. xxviii. 14. Never turn or careless; remember your adversary is still and his snares are continually set: Be v therefore, 1 Pet. v. 8. Keep your eyes open; look and ponder every thing, be n or hasty.

13th Rule. Be diligent in the means both lic and private; in hearing, meditation, Ch conference, ejaculatory prayer, reading; ally private prayer, a man cannot be a Ch without this. Ye cannot work or travel, ye eat, Prov. x. 4. *The hand of the diligent rich.*

14th Rule. Look upon sin as the greatest and never to be done; whatever ye do, sh and shun temptations to evil, as well as self.

- 2 *Rules I daily follow in my daily walk: or, some special rules for ordering my own particular conversation.*

1st *particular Rule.* In imitation of Christ and his apostles, and to get good done, I purpose to rise timely every morning, Job i. 5. 2 Chron. xxxvi 15.

2d *Rule.* To propose, when I am up, some work to be done, or the work of the day, and how and when to do it, and to engage my heart to it, 1 Tim. iv. 7. and at even to call myself to account, and to mourn for failings.

3d *Rule.* To spend a competent portion of time every day in prayer, reading, meditating, spiritual exercises, morning, mid-day, evening, and e'er I go to bed.

4th *Rule.* Once in the month, either the end or middle of it, I keep a day of humiliation for the public condition, for the Lord's people and their sad condition, for the raising up the work and people of God.

5th *Rule.* I spend, by and attour this, one for my own private condition, in conflicting with spiritual evils, and to get my heart more holy, or to get some spiritual exercise throughed, once in six weeks.

6th *Rule.* I spend every week once, four hours over and above my daily portion in private for some special causes, relating either to myself or others, relating either to temporal or civil affairs.

7th *Rule.* To spend some time on Saturday towards night for preparation to the Sabbath.

8th *Rule.* To spend six or seven days together once in a year, when I have greatest conveniency, wholly and only on spiritual accounts.

9th Rule. My ordinary and extraordinary works, which every day I strive to finish, as mortify sin, to perfect holiness in the fear of Lord, to glorify God, to instruct others and do good, to attend on and walk closely with Lord: This I propose every day to myself and finish, and at even do examine myself my progress and diligence therein; this I work and exercise.

10th Rule To be always on my guard, watchful and fearing frame.

3 Rules in Speaking.

I have found by Scripture and experience much it concerns us to watch our tongues, using that instrument whereby we may do me or good to others, that hath influence on whole body. And seeing religion kythes in this (He that bridles not his tongue, his religion is vain; and who so can, is a perfect) I will therefore set down some rules which I proposed to myself for ordering my speech words.

1st Rule. Speak nothing materially sinful, as lying, swearing, cursing, scolding, backbiting or any thing that may dishonour God; or your neighbour, Psal. xxxiv 13.

2d Rule. Speak no idle language, that no profit or edification, such as frothy or foolish talking and jesting; but let them be seasoned with grace, as with salt; Eph. v. 4. N xii. 36.

3d Rule. Speak not much; be sparing in course, James i. 19. *Slow to speak. In the multitude of words there wants not sin*

4th Rule. Speak soberly both as to matter
and

manner. It is said of the whore, Prov. vii. 17. *She is loud and clamorous*; and of some, Jude ver. 16. *that they speak high swelling words*. This is contrary to Christ, whose *voice was not heard in the streets*. A meek quiet spirit is calm in words; loud, violent, earnest speaking argues a proud, distempered, unmortified heart.

5th Rule. Speak not rashly nor hastily; be not precipitate in speaking; advise e'er ye speak; do not out with every thing ye conceive: *The righteous studieth to answer*.

6th Rule. Speak weightily and seriously, reverently and gravely, in religious discourses especially. Christ *spoke as one having authority*. Our speech as to the manner, as well as to the matter, should betray us that we *have been with Jesus*. Be not flight or careless.

7th Rule. Speak in faith; *I believed, and therefore spake*, Psal. cxvi. 10. 2 Cor. iv. 13. It is a fault to speak of these things we neither know nor believe; uncertainties are not fit matter of discourse: *That which we know declare we unto you*.

8th Rule. In speaking, it were good to be looking up in prayer to God in heart; as, if ye have spoken amiss, Oh Lord pardon; when ye are called to speak, Oh Lord open my mouth, and help to a seasonable word, and what to say; to seek a blessing, Lord bless what I am to discourse to my neighbour. Thus did Nehemiah ii. 4.

9th Rule. Speak wisely and pertinently to the time and purpose ye intend, and persons ye speak to; that is called *speaking words in season*, Col. iii. 16. *Let the word of Christ dwell richly in you in all wisdom, admonishing one another*.

10th Rule. Speak in fear: it were good to have a bridle always in the mouth, and no word

to get out without permission, Psalm xxxix. 1. It was ill said, *Our lips are our own, who is lord over us ?* As there is eating without fear, so there is speaking without fear.

11th Rule. Let not your neighbour's fault be the subject of your talk, though it be true *Who backbiteth not*, Psalm xv. 3. Shew thy neighbour his faults.

12th Rule. Speak not of thyself or worth *Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth* neither directly nor indirectly : let thy work praise thee. It is an ordinary thing for a proud heart to hunt for estimation from others to itself by telling its own acts or relations. I have added these last two, because professors ordinarily will carry in these.

4. Rules in our actions.

I shall comprehend in this both civil and religious actions ; actions would not only be good as to their matter, but as to their manner.

1st Rule. Do nothing without foresight ; let thine eye of knowledge guide thee continually in the way thou art to walk in. Lam. iii. 40 *first search and try your ways, then turn. Ponder the path of thy feet.* Do all things as a man and by rule, Prov. iv. 26. so shalt thou have peace.

2d Rule. Whatever thou do, do it spiritually as the Lord's work ; as to him, because commanded by him. Eph. vi. 6, 7. 8. Col. iii. 23.

3d Rule. Labour for spirituality in your outward deportments, as well as in your hearts, in a grave, wise, sober and humble carriage, *Be holy in all manner of conversation*, 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. Let holiness be on bells, pots, bridles and horses Zech. xiv. 20, 21. Have on the wedding-garment.

4th Rule. In midst of business look up ever and anon to heaven by ejaculatory prayer, to preserve the soul from corruption; and keep divine impressions that they die not out, Eph. vi. 18. Theff. v. 17.

5th Rule. Whatever thou doest, depend on the Lord; do nothing without him, but *in all by ways acknowledge him*, Prov. iii. 6. Isai. xxx. 2. Psalm xxxvii. 5. Neh. ii. 4. 1 Sam. xvii. 45.

6th Rule. Whatever ye do, *do it with all thine heart*, i. e. quickly without delay, and heartily; doing what thou doest only, and nothing else; Eccles. ix. 10.

7th Rule. Whatever ye do, do it in faith, without which it is impossible to please God; in faith of the lawfulness of it; in faith of God's assistance and acceptance: else, doubting, ye are damned, Rom. xiv. 22, 23. Heb. xi. 6, 7. Do nothing, without or against conscience.

8th Rule. Be sober in what ye do: eat, drink, marry and buy, as though ye did it not, in a holy indifference, referring the event to God, 1 Cor. vii. 29, 30, 31. Be not fretted with cares, say not out too much affections or heart with your actions; but *let your moderation be known to all men, the Lord is at hand*, Philip. iv. 5.

9th Rule. Rest not in actions, but seek the end of an action, Matth. vi. 16. Rest not in prayer, but labour to attain the end of prayer by meditation and prayer. Be not like children shooting at random without a mark.

10th Rule. Bound your actions with your callings: fight, but not out of your station, 1 Cor. vii. 24. *Let every man wherein he is called, walk with God*, 1 Theff. ix. 11. 1 Tim. v. 13. Doing your own business.

5. Rules for our Conversation.

1st Rule. Mark the frame of your heart, and your

your carriage, immediately after you have been near God; and see what deportment you are then inclined to follow, and study that always.

2d Rule. Follow that kind of conversation wherein ye have most peace after serious reflections on your ways: I think, little peace shall be found in a light, furious carnal conversation.

3d Rule. Look to the carriage of Christ, his apostles and prophets, and study that conversation that ye think was Christ's or the apostles; this was not a laughing, frothy, vain, light conversation. When therefore thou art examining such a carriage, ask, Would Christ have done this? would this set Paul to do? 1 Cor. xi. 1. & iv. 17. Matth. xi. 29, 30.

4th Rule. Study that conversation which is most agreeable and suitable to your profession, gospel, estate and station, 1 Thess. ii. 12. Walk as becometh the gospel, suitably to the providences ye are tryed with, James v. 13. and to the persons ye have to do with.

5th Rule. Walk not outwardly mournfully, before the wicked who may be ready to make sport of thy sadness, nor before these who may be discouraged. Shun carnal mirth, Micah i. 10. 2 Sam. i. 20.

6th Rule. Study that conversation which is most edifying, most convincing and condemning of the wicked, 1 Pet. i. 14, 15. and likest to glorify God and the gospel, Col. iv. 6.

7th Rule. A grave, serious conversation, mixed with serenity, is a good conversation; and this is like Christ, this is suitable to our great work and aims. Let the mad children of the world trifle and play, we are called to seriousness, 1 Tim. iii. 2. Tit. ii. 2.

8th Rule. Be circumspect in your conversation, and wise, especially towards them that are wicked,
Eph.

Eph. v. 15. Ecclef. ii. 14. Keep up the Christian decorum : let nothing efcape thee but what is befitting the majefty of a Christian ; labour, not to difparage that at all. Walk worthy of your calling.

9th Rule. Walk foberly in apparel, 1 Pet. iii. 3. fober in paffions, fober in expreffions ; do nothing violently or paffionately, keeping paffions within bounds : walk with a fober pace, not *tinkling with your feet*.

10th Rule. Walk kindly, lovingly and courteoufly ; be ready to ferve all : a tart rigid carriage is not good ; *The Son of man came eating and drinking*. Acts xxvii. 3. & xxviii. 2, 7. Stoicifm is not Chriftianity. Through thy gravity and holinefs let love appear ; receive all ; *become all things to all men*, except with apoftates and open enemies ; yea, let your reproofs be in love, Lev. xix. 17.

SECT. IX.

Declaring fuch things as, through the Lord's bleffing, have done me good.

I CANNOT deny but the Lord hath fhown me kindnefs, and done me good, and that a little one hath become a great nation ; and that, however I am poor and needy, yet the Lord remembers me : and, notwithstanding I came over this Jordan with my ftaff, yet now am I by the Lord's bleffing become two bands. But, whatever good it be that the Lord hath fhewn me, for the benefit of others, and confirmation of myfelf ; I have thought fit to fhew and fet down thefe things, which in my experience, through the Lord's bleffing, I have found to be moft helpful unto me, in furthering me in the ways of holinefs,
peace

peace and fellowship with God. And I have found these twenty-seven things especially con-
and blest for doing me good ;

1. The Society of saints : when they have been full in communicating their cases, they have encouraged me, my griefs have been eased by them, I have by their godly conversation been provoked to good works ; I have been kept in life by them, recovered out of decays by them, enlightened and edified by them, Eccles. iv. 4, 9. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 7. Heb. x. 24, 25. Prov. x. 17. *Iron sharpeneth iron.*

2. I have found much profit by observing Lord's providences, by searching into God's dispensations, whether good or evil ; this made me see much love in things, freed my judgment from confusions, and made me know my duty, Micah vi. 9. Hos. xiv. 10. Psalm cvii. Jer. viii. 7. Gen. xxv. 22. Exod. iii. 3, 4.

3. I have found meditation on the attributes of God to do me much good, especially his power, sovereignty and holiness, Job xxii. John xvii. 3: for thereby have I been made conform to his image, and my love, fear and have been begotten and increased, Psalm ix. Eph. iii. 18, 19.

4. I have found much good by a long and serious study and pondering of the covenant of grace ; the freedom, fulness and unchangeableness thereof ; the condition (faith) and nature thereof : by meditation on the gospel, its promises, offers and invitations ; this strengthened and sanctified me, given me more knowledge of Christ and of his ways than any thing that ever I was exercised in. I have found it indeed the *ministration of life*, Gal. iii. 2. *xi. throughout.* Rom. i. 16, 17.

I have found the Lord confirming me at
e, in not calling me abroad ; ordinarily this
been a gathering time, and never ordinarily
er than when alone : abstraction and solitude
done me good, Prov. xviii. 1. Numb. vi. 2,
Iof. ii. 14. God hath often times visited me
solitary wilderness.

. I have found outward afflictions and hard
sure from the world doing me good, hum-
g my soul, mortifying me to the world, mak-
Christ and his consolations sweet, whom be-
I cared not much for : I found it good to
r the yoke in my youth ; I have thereby learn-
dependence on God, and have had much ex-
ience of his love in supporting me under af-
flictions, sanctifying them to me, and delivering
out of them, Lam. iii. 27. Psalm xciv. 12.
b. xii. 11. Psalm cxix. 67, 71. Prov. xxix. 15.
c. v. 15.

7. I have found quietness in spirit, moderation
l calmness in speaking, and advisedness doing
good ; and, while thus in silence I have wait-
on God, his Spirit hath breathed, Isai. vii. 4.
ix. 15. Exod. xiv. 13. 2 Chron. xx. 17. Phil.
7. Lam. iii. 26. 1 Pet. v. 7.

8. I have found much good by the diligent
actice of private duties, such as prayer, medita-
n, reading, self-examination and such like : I
ve thereby been strengthened, quickened, and
own near to God ; they have been as meat and
ink, Matth. vi. 6. Luke xxii. 46. Psalm i. 2.
Job viii. 5. Prov. xviii. 1.

9. I have found extraordinary duties of fasting,
d improving other occasions over and above the
orning and evening sacrifice, do me much good ;
each of the Lord's mind by these hath been re-
aled, Dan. x. 12. and strong lusts have by these
extraordinary

extraordinary occasions received a dead fit have been sensibly comforted at these or these, after long sickness, have given me Psa. cxxvi. 6. Jer l. 5, 6. Isa. lviii. 7, 8, 9. 29.

10. I have found the Lord kind to me left off hearing the Conformists; since the scales have been falling from me whilst I heard, I was still kept in bondage vi. 17, 18. 1 Cor. v. 7.

11. I have found much good from the prayers of others; for, since I did enquire for that effect, I have found much good. I have observed, that these of us who do benefit of others prayers, were the most Christians; and those who neglect this, and wither, Job xlii. 8. Jam. v. 16. Eph Rom. xv. 30. 2 Thess. iii. 1, 2.

12. I have found very much good by good to others, by instructing, exhorting, teaching of them, and praying for them, especially the poor ignorant people. Yea, in that time while I have been speaking to them, glorious light hath shined upon my soul, as when I apprehend these things I have been doing to them more clearly; yea, when full of afflictions and sorrows going about this duty, I have thereby been lightened, my tale hath proved, Isa. xxxii. 20. Eccles. xi. 1. Prov

13. I have found the serious consideration of true Christian liberty, and of the ease of Christ's yoke, and Christ's love in comparison to a slavish spirit and scrupulous conscience, do me very much good, as my heart engage in the service of God, 1 Tim. ii. 4. Luke i. 74. Rom. vii. 1, 4, 6. 8. Neh. ix. 35. Deut. xxviii. 48. as likewise

considerations against discouragements, 1 Sam. xii. 19, 20.

14. I have found much profit and strength by considering of baptism, and what it sealeth; cases and scruples thereby cleared and removed, and faith of interest strengthened, and I thereby emboldned to draw near to God, Rom. vi. first twelve verses.

15. The Lord hath blessed the reading of practical writings to me, and thereby my heart hath been put into a frame, and much strength and light gotten; such as Isaac Ambrose, Goodwin, Mr. Gray, and very much by Rutherford's above others, but most of all by Thomas Shepherd of New-England his works; he hath by the Lord been made the interpreter of a thousand; so that, under Christ, I have been obliged to his writings, as much and more than to any mean whatsoever, for wakening, strengthening and enlightening of my soul; the Lord made him a well of water to me in all my wilderness-straits.

16. I have found it good to put a good construction on the Lord's ways, when they have been outwardly very sad, Exod. xx. 19.

17. I have found much good by speaking to the praise and commendation of God: when many times not so affectionately, yet sincerely out of the sense of duty, I have begun to praise him to others, I have found my tongue to have affected my heart, James iii. 2 Psal. cv. 3. and cxlv. 5, 6, 11. The Lord hath sensibly rewarded me for this.

18. I have found much good by sore and long inward temptations, being poured from vessel to vessel, changing and being changed, lifted up and casten down; the greatest settlement is by these. Isa. xxxviii. 16. by these (saith Hezekiah) shall

cross; the Lord hath signally owned me. and the fruits of them have been very great, as, praying under indispositions, reproving acquaintances, forsaking of ways and thoughts pleasing to the flesh, Jer. ii. 1, 2. Heb. Rom. ii. 7. Mat. v. 10. and xvi. 24.

20. I have found much good by studying exercising the duty of humility and submission James iv. 7. Duties are easy to an humble heart; it eases the soul of disquietments, and makes Hell easy. Hell is not Hell to an humble faithful Shepherd. I have ever found me humbled.

21. The calling to mind and seriously thinking on the Lord's dealings with me as to my body, his manifold mercies, has done much good, cleared my conscience, confirmed me of God's love and my interest in him, and made me love him. O what good hath the work of the Lord done in my heart!

to keep from further backsliding, Deut. xxix. 12, 13.

23. Meditation on the most common truths in general hath done me good, such as death, heaven, judgement, sin, God's being and providence, man's fall, and Christ's death, &c.

24. Speedy going about duties, without trifling or delaying. A duty done in time is worth twice so much delayed.

25. By writing on points of divinity; as, on the scriptures, on God's attributes, on christian duties, sermons, cases, and the like; these, like fresh water, have kept my heart.

26. Serious and deliberate self-examination, and, while thus exercised, trying myself, looking to the qualifications of saints and hypocrites in scripture, their sins and failings; studying the nature of true saving grace, the difference, according to the scriptures, betwixt false and true grace; this hath contributed much to my settlement.

27. I have found much good by being abstracted from meddling in temporal or civil business: that I had not great meddling in affairs in the beginning of my christian course; partly that others did not employ me, but took all to their own hand; partly that I was indifferent, and had no heart while I had so great things ado in reference to my soul. And altho' my affairs called for diligence, yet do I not now repent it; for I thereby got my heart wholly taken up with my soul's condition, and had no divertisement, Prov. xviii. 1.

SECT. X.

Declaring such things as have done me evil.

1. **A** Legal spirit. When Satan presses d
ties violently and boastingly, with th
der and lightning overdriving me, laying m
upon me than I am able to bear, putting n
wine in old bottles, seeking such and such dut
and so much, exacting them by weight and m
sure: this weakens my hands, irritates me, mal
me do nothing, seeing I cannot get what is enjo
ed done; makes me act slavishly, Gen. xxxiii.
Rom. vii. 11. Heb. x. 12, 13. Luke xix. 21.

2. The society of carnal unregenerate peop
and graceless formal professors, especially if
miliar with them, and not living very abstr
and at distance from them, or not testifying
gainst them or instructing them. They ha
when near, dispersed their poison and infecti
and turned my heart carnal; like some sick
ses, if ye ly not near the persons that have th
they smite not, 1 Cor. xv. 33. *Evil commun
tion corrupteth good manners.*

3. I have found the society of the godly hu
ful, and drawing my heart from God, and r
dering it carnal, when it hath not been spiritu
ly improven; when the Lord hath not b
fought to by mutual prayer, and no spiritual c
ference; and when I have stayed too long w
them at once, Heb. iii. 13. When there is
exhorting one another, there is hardning.

4. I have had my spirit turned out of frar
and quite distempered, by loud, violent, ha
and much talk, tho' of good purposes. I h
found the talking of the lips tend to penury, an
v

breach made in the spirit (as faith the wise man) by *perverse speaking*, James iii. 5. 6. Prov. xvii. 27. Mat. xv. 8.

5. I have found publick occasions and going oft from home hurtful, and these like the devil's market-days : let me prepare and pray as I will, yea, and watch, my spirit hath thereby been distracted and distempered, especially if I have gone on slight calls. Riding here and there is good neither for soul nor body.

6. I have found intemperance, and excess in the use of meat, drink and other recreations, very prejudicial, and to be the ordinary inlet of many evils; for, the body thereby being distempered, the spirit hath been utterly indisposed to any good exercise, Luke xxi. 34. Prov. xxv. 27. and xxiii. 20, 21.

7. Omission of duties in private, or slight performance of them; when I have begun to be more remiss in such gracious exercises of prayers, examination, meditation and reading, Mat. xxvi. 41. Prov. xxiii. 21.

8. Neglect of ejaculatory prayer, when conversing with others; for this is the fountain of waters that drops from heaven, and makes the heart fruitful, Mat. xxvi. 41.

9. Impertinent vain thoughts in the morning, and when riding; and when in private religious exercises; tho' materially good, I have found these to distemper my spirit as much as any thing, and to render me utterly unfit for duty, Jer. iv. 14.

10. Unwatchfulness and heart-security while in the world, not being *in the fear of God all the day long*, not keeping guard, or neglecting the continual oversight of my heart, tongue and actions, but growing careless. I have found my heart

heart unwatched to run away, and eng
and temptations; many disorders in the
there is no government, Mat. xxvii.
hath done evil exceedingly; thro' th
publick what I gain in private.

11. Unbelieving discouragements a
sense of wants, sins, desertions and te
these have weakned my hands, 1 Sai
Lam. i. 9. Jér ii. 28. Heb. xii. 12, 1
Peter did fear, then did he begin to fir

12. Great engagements in civil affai
siness, and eager prosecution of them;
distracted me, and made me utterly un
to God, Luke x. 4. and xxi. 34.

13. Pride, and conceiting much
boasting of myself, seeking the prail
and by a careful performance of duties
exalt myself, and to share with Christ
ter of salvation; this hath made the I
me many times, withdrawing me from
lution, to hide pride, Rom. ix. 31,
made the Jews miss of righteousness
they sought it *as it were by the works of*

14. Sloth in long sleeping, and t
time; this hath clothed me with rags, c
company.

SECT. XI.

*Declaring some of Satan's spiritual and
devices, whereby the work of sanctificati
much hindered, 2 Cor. ii. 11*

1. **I**N making me think the essence
penitance to consist in contriti
more than in turning in heart and pri
it; whereby it hath come to pass, the

ing myself in a mourning sorrowful frame, but straitned in my affections, I have not turned from sin, but was still taken up in drawing out my sensible sorrow for it, as thinking there was no true repentance without this; and, when I mourned, have rested in this, as if this were sufficient: whereas repentance doth mostly consist in turning to God, and mourning is but the manner and qualification of this act of turning, Joel ii. 12. *turn with mourning.* Isa. lviii. 6. *The fast God hath chosen, is, breaking the bands of wickedness.* Prov. xxi. 3:

2. After falls and slips and ordinary departures, Satan has sought to astonish me with my fall, and to amaze and confuse me so with what I had done, as thereby I was kept from getting up to my feet, and going forwards; like those that running a race catch a fall, and are therefore so perplexed, thinking what to do, that in the mean time they lose much time, and are far behind. The best way were to get up, and consider our ways, mourn, seek pardon, and then go to work; so was it with Joshua, Chap. vii. 10. viz. Joshua after the smiting of Israel, lies complaining; the Lord saith thus, *wherefore liest thou thus?* up to thy work. Gen. xlii. 1. and xliii. 10. *why look ye upon one another?* when David sinned, he immediately falls to repentance; I have sinned, yet now, Lord, forgive. It must, when all is done, turn and end in this. So in Job xxxiv. 32. *If thou hast done wickedly, what is done cannot be helped, do so no more.* He doth not say, amaze and distract yourselves with cares; for, *who can by thinking add one cubit to his stature?*

3. In making me think that because I come not up the length of duty, or to do it in that manner and form that is required, that better omit it
than

than do it in such a sinful manner; whereby it hath come to pass that nothing hath been done at all, God not honoured, and others not profited; not considering that doing the duty as we may, is a mean to the better doing of it, as scribbling is to good writing. Humility will not stand on such niceties; the Lord pardons imperfections: beate the duty of reproof hath been omitted, because I could not do it so freely, evangelically and plainly as the Lord requires, thinking that so doing of it was an abomination; this is over-driving: but it is better paying what we may, than let all run on our head. 2 Sam. vi. 7, 8, 9, 10. when David saw what reverence was required to the ark; he let it alone; *who can stand?* unbelief whereby the soul thinks God such a hard master that will exact to the uttermost, and pride in disdain to do any thing but what may be worthy or meritorious, are the causes of this deceit.

4. By the injecting of thoughts materially good, yet impertinent to the exercise the soul for the present is called unto, whereby my purpose hath been broken, my spirit made vain, no good done, nor peace in it: and when other palpably sinful thoughts have been extruded, these real enemies, yet seeming friends, have been let in, because of their *Sheep's clothing*; and it is but the devil transforming himself into an *angel of light*, 2 Cor. xi. 14. *the righteous bringeth forth fruit in season*; these thoughts are vain, because fruitless and unseasonable.

5. In doing of duties, and not seeking to attain the end of duties; not because I thought this worthy, but I thought it sufficient if the Lord was honoured: and in this snare I am ordinarily intrapped, tho' beaten out of formality; and this hath rendered the means useless to me,
and

and ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. I have been like children, who with their little bows shoot, but at no mark, but that they may shoot; or as when they set their paper-boats to sea, but look for nothing else than to see them swim upon the waters; and so it may be said of them, *there is no end of their labour*. And hence I have exhorted; not to convert or edify, but because commanded, and to shew obedience, and sometimes to render inexcusable; and thus have waited on the Lord in private and publick means, not for supplying of wants or drawing near unto God, but merely to do homage unto him; whereby there is a standing still, and no progress; duties rendered a burden, because no end to draw to, or no end intended; and my motion irregular, because no end to direct: and so have wrought at random.

6. Under the pretence of waiting on the Lord for strength, I have been driven to gaze, and neglect the duty itself, when there hath been an opportunity; so, in preparing for prayer, have neglected prayer: in looking for strength and grace to edify when in company, nothing hath been done; and strength received, not improved. Acts i. 11. *why stand ye gazing? go to your work, to Jerusalem*. Mat. xx. 6. Jer. xiii. 16. *give glory to the Lord*; lest, looking for light, darkness come.

7. To neglect the practice of grace and duty, by resting in the sweet and relishing speculation thereof, and resolution to do it; I have been taken up with the sweetness of duty on the mind, but not so careful to practise it, tho' there have been some slight resolutions. This I thought sufficient, or else thro' security I have not expected difficulty in the practice; and so, knowing and approving

approving and teaching others the law neglecting it they say *and do not*, Rom. 18. Mat. vii. 21. Jer. ii. 19, 20. so that of these speculations hath not been so practise, as to relish and delight the using in expatiating on such subjects.

8. I have been much hindered from doing the manner of duty, rather than the of it; by studying faith in prayer, rather than in faith; by studying openness and plain in reproving, rather than reproof itself; in constancy in watching, rather than itself: which I have found to proceed from choosing the excellency of it rather than the thing itself; and from Satan's perswading all commands are but the Lord's seeking of quarrel to cast out with me, and that he only seeks duties, but that they be done in a manner as thou knowest thou cannot; that so, when he cannot condemn for the he shall be sure for the manner to find whereby my mind hath been so taken up with circumstantial, and perfect and exact notions of duties, that the matter and fulfilment hath been neglected. I have made this of it the matter.

9. Satan with my foolishness, tyrannically, presses the doing of many things which is impossible; that so, dividing with several objects, nothing may be won and all slighted; so that when I come to have I ado? it is answered, ye have this and the other thing; when I am called to a thing, I address to another, and thus *trouble many things, like Martha*, Luke x. 41, which one thing if my spirit were taken might come to some profit, and get it done.

seeking to grasp too much, I let all go. When many croud out or in at a passage, they hinder one another; but the rule is, *whatever thou dost, do it with all thy might*, i. e. Let thy heart be taken up wholly with that one thing while thou art doing it, and with no other.

10. Satan's transforming into an angel of light, by gilding vices with lustre and appearance of virtue, and under spiritual and specious pretences: hence have I been tempted to lightness, excess in comforts, under pretence of shunning unthankfulness, and of not using christian liberty, and of walking uncomfortably; and hence neglected to affect the heart with the evil of sin, because repentance consists more in turning from sin than in sorrow for it. Prayer under indisposition hath been shunned, lest I should render the easy yoke of Christ a grievous burden: whereby sin hath prevailed by these, when it hath been overcome when it appeared in its own clothing; and the *grace of God turned into wantonness*, 2 Cor. xi. 14. Rom. vi. 1. Gal. v. 13. *called to liberty, yet not to use it as an occasion to the flesh.*

11. In following the disposition of my spirit as a rule in reference to duty, rather than the call of providential conveniency of doing it; whereby many occasions of doing good, to others especially, have been lost thro' indisposition to these duties, and some seeming dispositions to do other duties: and this is so much the more dangerous, that it begins to be a debated principle, which of the two, viz. the disposition of the spirit, or providential conveniency, is to be followed? seeing, if I follow not the disposition of my spirit, then I shall do the other duty but heartlessly, and omit a duty to which my spirit is disposed; and besides, James i. 13. would seem to be for it. But I have
most

fles, and that under the highest pains ;
it hastily, not giving time to breathe ; an
ing such exactness, or else not at all to b
ted ; and that without any promise of a
so that, finding the Lord's yoke so hard
either casten it off, or sometimes heartl
formed it ; and nothing hath prejudiced
than this. Talents hath been flighted
God was apprehended as a hard master ;
not served, because our yoke not made
version and want of love to God, becau
1 John iv. 18. But I have spoken of th
10. 1st *Evil*. It is no wonder theref
bond-woman should be cast out ; of t
which when I have been convinced, I h
to the other extreme, in casting out the
man altogether, and to indulge myself
I have said in the 10th *Decit*.

13. When I could not be driven from
to heart matters of salvation. yet hath

14. Satan by making me pore excessively on evidences of grace, and by occupying me in laying continually the foundation and trying it, as thinking it never sure enough, hath hereby kept me from my generation-work, and from progress in grace; in which exercises if I had been as diligent as in examination of myself, I might have been assured more quickly, 2 Pet. i. 10. It is true, we should examine our states, 2 Cor. xiii. 5. but it is wrong to be only and continually taken up with this; so that, when called to patience, and believing, and honouring of God, Satan hath said, lay a foundation e'er ye build a superstructure: but it is dangerous to be trying our armour when we are called to fight (as one said, Heb. vi. 1. if ye have not full assurance of your state, yet take your hazard of the precious foundation laid in Zion, and build on it: God lays this foundation, and this foundation standeth sure.

15. In making faith or any work in us the foundation of my comfort, rather than the free, full and immutable promise and good-will of God in Christ; and in making the foundation of duty to be rather from our covenant with God, or our part of it, than from the Lord's covenant with us, and his part of it, which hath a long time kept me unsettled and wavering, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Ezek. xvi. 62. *not by vertue of thy covenant.*

16. But Satan and mine own heart hath kept me strongly and long in this snare of seeking to establish my own righteousness: for when my heart hath been in any good frame, and under sense of wants, and desiring to be found in duty, hath resolved to go about such and such means, for obtaining of such things; I say, I have found Satan deceiving me herein, making me love these
Z
duties,

duties, means and graces, and the them at such a time, because these graces, means and time have been the mine own desires and resolutions, and been mine own (as it were) and therefore, when other means were bel's fuitable, yet have despised them, be mine own choice and purchase; and whe and manifestation thereof have run thro' ther channel than I have cut for it to have been grieved, and prized the m and, when I have fallen in sins resolves I have grieved more upon the accour resolutions have been broken, and w because I had *set my heart as the heart of* either for the wrong done to God, or hazard; and so, like God, I have love but the object of my own decree: who hath been provoked to break these resol which the tower that reached to heave down, Prov. xix. 3. Rom. x. 3. Mar lfa. x. 7. Psal. lviii. 3.

17. When beaten out of this by t mercy, and made to rejoice in infir God may be exalted, seeing the wildne under the pretence of quiet submission led by the will of God, I had been t resolve nothing at all, and so turned ca ing from one extreme to another, c Philip. ii. 12, 13.

18. Thro' a desire to allow to eve time wherein I should be so and so e hath come to pass that I have secretly Spirit drawing me to other duties and because I would not alter my intended and so lost the assistance of God's Spir 41. Numb. xiv. 39.

19. I have many times in prayer asked things not convenient to be then granted, and so have not been answered thro' asking amiss; as when I have sought as much grace as would serve me all my lifetime, James iv. 3. John iv. 15. *Give me that I thirst not again.* Sometimes I have been seeking the removal of a trouble e'er I have been rightly exercised under it; 2 Cor. xii. 8. sought great enlargements and raptures and sensible manifestations, sought mercies without pains; which the Lord not granting, because amiss, I have been discouraged from prayer thro' refusals.

20. When difficult duties have been pressed, as mourning, fasting, diligence, prayer under indispositions, bearing the cross, walking in the strait gate, I have been made to think that the end of that command was mostly to cross myself, and therefore did the duty oft-times more as mine own prejudice and cross, rather than as commanded by God, and the mean to attain to such an end (hence Heathens cut themselves, and Papists whip themselves) for this did me ill; it engendered hard thoughts of God, and made me do duties heartlessly, as likewise without success, because I sought no more than the crossing of myself.

21. In not prizing or esteeming little mercies because common, and fear to rest in them; thus *despising the day of small things.*

22. In not shunning little evils, fearing to be thereby *tithing the Annise and Cummin.*

23. Thro' a strong persuasion of an absolute decree in God, which yet I judge truth, and of God's sovereignty, *and that it is not of him that willeth or runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy;* I have been thereby tempted to excuse my sins, to challenge God for double-dealing, have not noticed his invitations and exhortations; Rom. ix. 19.

who hath resisted his will? Not distinguished betwixt the nature of God, and free absolute decree of God, and operation of God; and that it is not the damnation of the wicked. God ultimately and for itself intends, but the manifestation of his justice.

24. *By limiting of the holy one of Israel;* by cutting out and prescribing to God a way of helping me; and when he hath not come in my way, as he will not, nor no reason he should, I could not imagine his coming a mercy, 2 Kings v. 11. in Naaman. Hence I have proposed God's way with other Christians, and their exercises, as the way to the Spirit to deal with me; and, not finding this, I have been discouraged and disquieted and unthankful, and spent my labour and strength in vain, in gazing after that, and labouring to walk in a path the Lord was not willing to lead me. There is a sovereignty in leading of saints to glory. I have limited the Lord in his way, by pourtraying to myself, and conceiving such a grace, and under such a notion and form; so that if I had not that very form and notion of it I conceived, tho' I had it really, yet did I not think I had it. Oh under what various terms doth the Lord express one thing, that folk might not restrict grace to one notion!

25. In striving against the outward acts of sin, and not considering the inward corruption of the heart; *in making clean the outside of the platter*, but neglecting to cleanse it within; cutting the branches, and sparing the root, Math xxiii. 26. whereby I have made no profit in holiness, because the fountain hath not been cleansed.

26. Under the pretence of discretion, prudence and patience, I have neglected the life and zeal of actions. I have reprov'd but darkly, in respect

spect of prudence and discretion ; I have not stressed myself in private means, under pretence of sobriety ; have neglected to bring my heart to any sense of sin, under pretence of moderation. Oh what ill ly disguised under moderation, sobriety, patience and Christian liberty ! we have a sinful patience.

27. By going on in duties in my own strength, without looking for divine assistance, which hath done me much evil. When I have gone on in the confidence of my own strength, the Lord hath plagued me for my presumption, as in Peter : when duties have been difficult, relying on and looking to mine own strength, I have been discouraged.

28. I have neglected the outward practice of repentance, under pretence that the Lord requires the heart ; but we should serve the Lord both in body and in spirit. It is true, we should not rest in the outward, or mainly look thereunto, but should look to the heart mostly ; yet should not the outward act be neglected.

29. By giving ear and credulously believing suggestions of sense concerning myself and interest, and concerning God, without examination. Credulity, and easiness to believe every thing suggested or spoken in books, or written down there, hath prejudiced me much. Hanging my faith on mens belts, and not examining suggestions, doctrines, writings thro' the line of reason and thro' scripture, hath made me wander long in doubts and fears unsettledly ; but since I have tried all things, and laid aside all books, and had recourse to the fountain, I have been much better.

30. By judging by outward appearances, and misbelieving of success (which hath come thro' not looking to God) hath much discouraged me from duty.

CHAP. VIII.
Declaring Mercies.

SECT. I.
Containing general Mercies.

1. **I** find reason to bless the Lord for and perfect health, so as I never ber that I lay (except when I had the two days sick, either thro' pain or heat

2. I have reason to bless the Lord for cy of good education; so that, where cast my lot, I had occasions of good I saw not much wild example; and, if I was with, the Lord did put them some pains with me, which tho' it diverted me, yet did prepare for it.

3. In beating me out of all my false refuges of lies; in which if I had continued for ever. O what a mercy Lord discovered to me my condition, of duties, mine own inability to save distance and enmity betwixt God and I

4. Sparing mercies. O what hath born of me! surely more than of any creature. How often did I provoke I me to my place! he spared me, notwithstanding my blasphemy, my sabbath-breaking, breaking of vows, sinning against sliding, cursing even in a lie, profaning in duties, untractableness; yea, where have had great glory by my destruction hath or could have born so much as and should I not therefore love? *Therefore because much is forgiven.*

5. O the great pains the Lord hath taken, and the cost he hath been at with me ! what pains in my first education ! what pains in conversion ! what pains after conversion ! what pains in recovering out of backsliding ! what pains by afflictions, by temptations, convictions ; mercies of all sorts, waterings public and private ! what a constant suiter hath he been for my heart ! what day in which there hath not been some message or other ! surely he is in very good earnest with me, he hath constantly and uninterruptedly followed me.

6. In bestowing saving grace on my soul ; washing me from nature, from sin and Satan and hell ; by renewing his image on my soul ; by enlightening mine eyes, quickening my dead soul, changing me quite, giving me rest ; by admitting me to fellowship with himself, by entering in a covenant with me ; by taking me from my sinful ways and courses, and conforming me to his ways in heart, speech and practice ; making an inward, blest, right and universal change, differing from formal hypocrites and gospel-professors that are carnal.

7. In recovering me out of a backslidden estate, after carelessness and security, departing from God, until I had ruined myself again, and was as it were twice dead ; and, when I was at the last gasp, he pitied me, recovered me, engaged me in his service, kept me through his power and goodness (notwithstanding of many oppositions) at this diet, until I at last recovered, and that he did set me on a rock higher than I. O what cost and expences was my recovery to him ! He would not let me die at a distance with him, but by afflictions and sore trials called me home.

8. Mercies in a wilderness-condition. When
yet

yet but weak, how did he condescend to my weakness! though he was the high and lofty One, how did he bear my manners, my murmurings, my faintings, my lustrings, my impatience, my dulness, my deadness, my unbelief! He never left me for all these things, but was ever with me; he supplied all my wants, and many a time revived my fainting soul, and did carry me as an eagle doth her young ones. and no strange god with him at all; he never left me until he brought me to a large land and fruitful. Oh the care he had of me in the great wilderness, preserving me and carrying me through, was a wonderful mercy.

9. I am obliged unto the Lord for talents; that he created me not void of understanding, but hath put me in some capacity to be serviceable to him; he hath instructed me in the wonderful things of his law, made me know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: and what shall I say? my natural abilities were very much helped and improved by grace; through thy precepts I have attained to understanding.

10. I acknowledge with all thankfulness the great mercy of God in keeping me on his side in this evil day; that I have been preserved in this general apostacy; that I have mustered on his side, and under his standard, against the dragon making war in heaven against the Lamb. How many have profanity, error, vanity, formality, sloth and worldliness destroyed, or rendered useless? yea, even tall cedars: yet me hath he kept from the destroying pestilence, yea, kept in life, and through grace privileged to be a plain witness for him against the dragon and the courses of these times; to do some little thing, at least to shew my good-will.

11. By upholding me with his visitations, innumerable times restoring my soul to life, preserving my feet from falling, and mine eyes from tears. Oh the many loving, refreshing visitations I had of him, under deadness, confusions, distractions, sorrows, weights: hence hath he been as the dear shining sun after the rain. These have been the means by which I have been kept in life; these are his favours, in these days of famine, feeding me and keeping me in life.

12. In many times delivering me out of hell itself; when the sorrows of death compassed me about, when overpowered with despair, he brought me out of the great and terrible pit; and when all other means and friends failed, and neither could nor would help, the Lord himself kept in, and calmed all these terrible storms; when I could not bear any longer: Nor was I ever in any extremity but he helped me, yea, out of great and sore troubles.

13. Mercies in afflictions. Surely in faithfulness hath he afflicted me. It is a mercy to be taken in under his discipline, a covenant-mercy; but he hath supported me in all my afflictions: and when a sign and a wonder, and a terror to all my friends and acquaintances, left of friends and relations; and ungratefully used by them, when did the Lord take me up, and gave me shelter, meat and drink that the world knew not of; and what shall I say? at last delivered me out of them all, at least out of the most pressing, and that by his own hand. He hath delivered me from all dangers, fears, snares and sorrows.

14. All these are heightened by these circumstances; 1mo, That the Lord hath visited me with special love, the right-hand blessings, grace, Christ and sanctification. 2do, That it is the
Lord.

Lord himself that is eminently seen in them; he lets none do me good but himself, especially great deliverances; the Lord brings all about wonderfully. 3^{to}, I see them all stamp't with free grace, and their motto, *Not for your sakes, but for my name's sake, and because of the Lord Jesus.* I see them all proceeding from the free grace and love of Christ Jesus. 4^{to}, 'That he hath singled me out of all my tribe and kindred, and past by them all, and chosen me for himself. 5^{to}, That the Lord is seen universally in all these things: he doth all things most excellently for me: not in one or two particulars, but in every thing I have add. *Thou, Lord, wilt ordain peace for us; for thou hast wrought all our works in us,* Isai. xxvi. 12. 6^{to}, The Lord is constant in his kindness; it is not for a fit or start, but these whom he hath loved; he loveth to the end: his love is a constant love, he never takes away his loving kindness. 7th, That the Lord by all mercies sanctifies me, and draws me nearer to himself: I am made to know more of God by these; my heart is warmed in love and affection towards him by the remembrance of these; and through experience of these I am made to come to him, and depend on him, and engaged to thankfulness. 8th, That they are to me, who am so wild, so miserable, so sinful, who have abused his grace and mercy, and daily grieve him, and am less than the least of all his mercies; this heightens the mercy. What am I, that the Lord should visit me? *Lastly*, Considering this, that when favours are so few; it is much in a day of indignation, much in a day of famine and confusion, when all are generally crying out, *My leanness.*

SECT.

SECT. II.

special mercies, or little particular favours from the Lord, as to my spiritual condition and temporal.

S for particular mercies, they are innumerable and past reckoning, and would take much time to tell them over, and much pains write them down; and because I purpose to tell them by themselves at large, and in respect who reads what I have written, may there many of them, I will forbear.

Thus have I run through the most remarkable circumstances of the Lord's providence towards me in my conversion, and what followed thereon; and have been signally assisted in calling mind, and observing the Lord's way and mind them. And what can I say or give to the Lord for all his mercies and pains! but, Blessed ever be he, that ever looked upon me, that hath done so great things for me, that hath borne with me till now, and hath given me time and strength to set down on record his kindness! O that I may walk worthy of his pains! To him, though Christ Jesus, be glory for ever. *Amen.*

*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,
and good-will towards men.*

What follows was not dedicated to Mr. Thomas Ross.

CHAP. IX.

Of my Calling to the Ministry.

SECT. I.

On the Grounds upon which I judged myself called to the Ministry.

I Was much concerned to know whether I was indeed called by the Lord to the exercise of the ministry, or whether any inclination or pressure of spirit I had thereto, did proceed

ceed from my own fancy ; for I can never think that any will discharge this office aright, who hath not a sense of his divine call upon his spirit, or comfortably go about the same, neither can promise himself any success therein : for such as the Lord hath not called, *nor stood in his counsel*, it is threatened that they *shall not profit this people*, Jer. xxiii. 32. Therefore it is of much concernment to us to be clear in this. Yet I acknowledge many are called of Christ to preach, who do not know it, but fear they are not ; even as many are effectually called, who know not so much ; and therefore it is that both the one and the other live less comfortably. And as many think they belong to, and have interest in Christ, who really have none ; so, many judge themselves, and are judged by others, to be true ministers, of Christ, who are not, but idol-ministers, never commissioned by Christ.

2dly, Therefore did I judge it my duty to endeavour to have my call cleared to me, and for this cause have set apart some solemn days, in which by fasting and prayer, both before I entered to the ministry and after, I have earnestly besought the Lord for light in this matter, and to clear to me whether he called me or not ; and have seriously searched and meditated, and sadly thought on this subject : and the issue of all such deliberations was, that I was inclined to think, from what I could gather from God's Word or work, that he did call me to bear his name, to deliver from the power of Satan to God, to witness for God, that the works of the world were evil.

3dly, The grounds upon which I was convinced and did believe the Lord called me were,
1. That I was not now to expect audible voices from heaven in an extraordinary manner, or
within

within us, saying, *Arise, preach the gospel*; for, however apostles and extraordinary prophets were so called immediately, yet that such who now are called to receive it by means of men: therefore, though I did not receive any extraordinary voice within or without, there was no reason upon that account to doubt of my call. 2. That much less was a man's own imagination or groundless fancy to be counted a call from God; for many (I say) think they are called of God, as Jer. xxiii. whom the Lord hath not sent. 3. That any act of man doth not give a call to a minister; for ordination by ministers, or election by the people, which are the two means by which it is pretended this call is conveyed, is posterior to this call of God: and, besides ministers may ordain, and people may elect, such as were never called of God; so, though never so regularly ordained and admitted, yet are they to be esteemed no ministers of Christ.

4thly, As the revelation of God's Word in all ages hath been the rule whereby to discern who have been called of God to be his servants, and who not; and therefore, when God revealed himself immediately to his prophets, this immediate revelation published by the prophets was the ground of faith and rule of practice: so now, the revelation of God's will being committed to writ or scripture, it hence follows that by the Scriptures only we can know who are his ministers called of him, and who are not; and this knowledge is as certain as any knowledge that could be had from the prophets of old, and as clear and evident, Luke xvi. *If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe though one arise from the dead.* The Scriptures then I must look into, and by them know whether the

Lord, hath called me or not. The g
in several places of Scripture: *Li*
Occupy till I come. 1 Pet. iv. 10. *As*
received the gift, so let him minister
1 Cor. xii. 7. *The manifestation of the*
to profit withal. By all these Scriptu
that whatever talents men have re
Christ, they are not to lye idle, nor t
in a napkin, but that they are to b
and exercised for God: and this Scr
py till I come, is the general warrant t
and all other persons of different occ
gifts have to discharge their office.
enquire, What is my call to preach
Our Lord's command and call, *Occu*
The word was brought to my r
when I was exercised about this n
did not the Lord command us in h
man should misimprove any talent: h
nisters in preaching do not but occu
come. And here is my first ground.

5thly, By this general call none is
engaged to follow the ministry but
qualified: for he who is fitted for
for a scholar, for a lawyer, for a pl
though he is bound by this general t
talent for God, yet is not every one l
ture bound to discharge the office of
unless he be qualified thereto. It
further requisite to a divine call, th
be fitted more for this, than for any tl
therefore who is not qualified for the r
not gifts, is not called; and he who i
for this than for any thing else, is cal
because he is called to minister as he
ed, 1 Pet. iv. 10. A man's talent i
miner of that general, *Occupy till I ca*

begin to see what is my talent ; and truly there was no other thing I was more fitted for, or qualified, as preaching and serving God in the ministry : and though my parts were but weak, and my talent small, especially in the beginning ; yet did I see some measure of qualifying and divine preparation for this work, and truly more than for any other employment, and therefore did I judge I was bound to occupy for God in that work. Some natural endowments I had, by which I was sufficiently capable of any science, yea, of natural theology : the dealings of God with my spirit in the work of conversion were very distinct ; and though I could not see but confusedly at first, yet afterwards I did see to perceive that work very distinctly : and not only so ; for I judge it very needful for a minister to be converted e'er he endeavour to convert others, *Luke. xii. 32. Psal. li. 12, 13. Restore the joy of thy salvation ; and then will I teach transgressors thy ways.* So, *Isai. vi. 7.* the prophet's iniquity must be taken away e'er he receive his commission, and that after deep humbling in the dust. The Lord did not only, by conversion begun and renewed, fit me for the ministry ; but did give me great experience of the exceeding evil of my heart, of the terrors of God, that so I might know to perswade others, *2 Cor. v. 8.* as likewise opened my eyes to see the glorious mysteries of the covenant of grace, telling me something every day as it were : and truly I had not been many days in Christ's school, judging the covenant of grace, when I thought I was come to a new world ; my former life seemed a dark howling wilderness, and the life of grace I looked upon as the lightsome Canaan, the harbour of rest after my toffings. Diverse and various conflicts I

had with unbelief, and much exercised
 law and the bond-woman, seeking to
 conscience. I was much helped by
 the Galatians, and Calvin's institutio
 thing more by that book called the
 Modern Divinity ; by some old writer
 Bradwardin's letters, Mr. Hamilton
 heart ; but especially by reading the ep
 Romans, by prayer and meditation, b
 came to receive very much satisfaction i
 in the gospel. I perceived that our di
 much altered from what it was in the
 reformers time : when I read Knox,
 Tindal, Luther, Calvin, Bradford, &c.
 I saw another scheme of divinity, muc
 greeable to the scriptures and to my
 than the modern. And tho' I plainly e
 the errors of the Antinomians (for th
 lay very near truth) yet I perceived a g
 to be in very few, and that the most p
 ministers did wofully confound the two
 and were of an old-testament spirit ; an
 the glory of Christ, grace and gospel di
 their writings and preaching. But I
 and was at enmity with Mr. Baxter, a
 enemy to the grace of God, under the
 opposing some Antinomianism : he bold
 what others thought and materially b
 ven whilst they did speak against him ;
 he was hardened in his way. Now I th
 great pains the Lord did take in this w
 experience also I had of great affliction
 Lord's support under them, and deliv
 them, and sanctifying of the same to
 structiong me in many chief lessons by
 what should all this mean, said I, b
 Lord gives me experience of these thin

nd. I should make this his righteousness known in the great congregation? if this be spoken in my ear, shall I not divulge it *on the house-tops*? Luke xii. and was not all this to qualify me, and make me a fit minister of the new Testament? and this was a second consideration to clear my all to me.

6thly, The Lord did by his Spirit apply the general call particularly to my soul: he brought home that word, *occupy till I come*; and dealt with me, told me that the Lord called me to serve him in the gospel of his Son, and to employ what talents I had that way; was at much pains with me till I should yield: for gifts and abilities to preach and pray are not a sufficient call to a man to be a minister, tho' they be necessary to the call. A man's natural gift and ability for any magistracy doth not presently call him to that office; and some have gifts for divers offices, that yet are called but to one. And hence it is, that a man's call to the office of the ministry is in some things different from the call of believing: for that call or command of God to believe, reaching all within the visible Church, doth oblige all thereunto, whether they do so or not, yea, whether the spirit strive with them or not, tho' without this they neither shall nor can believe; but this call to be ministry, tho' it be in God's word, yet it doth not oblige any particularly to the work of the ministry without the working of the Spirit: and therefore is the application of the Spirit, in the matter of the call to the ministry, a very necessary part, and constituent of the call, and requisite not only to enable us to the thing as it is in the case of believing, but likewise to warrant that particular thing. For, however the general call, *occupy till I come*, do warrant such as have parts and talents

to employ them for God ; yet doth it not warrant a godly able man to exercise his talents in a publick ministerial way more than any others, until the Spirit determine his Spirit : and this I found the Spirit did likewise to me, (1.) In representing to my soul the beauty and glory of the office of the ministry. O to serve the Lord in this ! said I ; nothing is like it ! to testify for God, to hold forth the *riches of Christ*, to bear his name ; what more honourable employment ! and like as the merchant must see the pearl e'er he buy it, Mat. xiii. 45. and we must see the Son e'er we believe in him, so that beauty and glory of the work of the Ministry must be seen e'er we take with it. (2.) The Lord by his Spirit did draw out and incline my heart to this work ; and so many times I was taken off from other studies and exercises, and was set on this, and many times did I ardently desire it ; yea, I had marvellous delight in the exercise of any work belonging to the ministry, whether it was reading of Theology either practical or polemick, meditating upon or writing my thoughts, studying or preaching of sermons : and truly parents send their children to these trades that they observe them to be most of themselves inclined to ; *send me, said Isa. vi. 6.* (3.) By fitting, preparing and qualifying me for that employment ; by renewing a distinct work of conversion in my soul ; by exercising me with various and great outward afflictions ; by discovering unto me something of the mystery of grace and of the gospel : and the more fitted I was, the more inclined to the work ; and tho' I studied but little, yet the Lord blessed it marvellously. (4.) By doing my soul good, in being exercised in preparing for the ministry : for it was by studying to preach, and meditation on several subjects, that my soul recovered out of my first backsliding ;

reckoning; and, by meditating upon subjects and preaching of them, I daily grew in grace and knowledge of Christ.

7thly, The Lord not only by his Spirit working inwardly upon me, but likewise by his work, did clear that he called me: for my heart was utterly averse to any other study or employment; I attempted, designs and endeavours to settle in any other station were crushed and broken, and matters in the world went still worse and worse, until I resolved and engaged with the work of the ministry; and from that time I observed the manner rather turned; and my captivity was turned to liberty. What judgement can I make of the Lord's opening all other doors, and his opening of this, that I should go in here, and look to no other thing?

8thly, I am much confirmed in my call to the ministry by that providence of the vows I made to this purpose, that I should be drawn out to make such a vow; that the Lord should so soon testify his approbation thereof, and answer me suddenly, so clearly, so fully, and so particularly and suitably to my vow in all things: for my want of assurance was my great doubt, and that which made me afraid to engage with the ministry; whereupon I vowed solemnly, that if the Lord should clear up my interest to me, and reveal the mystery of the gospel, covenant of grace, and faith to me, I should then apply myself to the ministry, provided the Lord did answer in five years. But the Lord in less than six weeks answered it; for in a month, or thereabout, did the Lord convince me of faith, called me to believe, opened his covenant to me, never left me until I believed it, and thereafter sealed it with the gift of assurance: and in my vow I said, that, the Lord would hearken to me, in clearing of these

these things, I would look on it as an evident token he called me to serve him in the gospel.

9thly, About the latter end of the year 1665, I remember the Lord put this call close to my door, told me I was to be his witness, to testify for him against the world; to do all the good I could to mankind wherever I was called; and that I should make this my only work, and be faithful, free and full in it; that many things needed reformation, and that the Lord would employ me in it. This was pressed much on me; and because I refused, and, like Jonah, fled from the Lord, he sent a storm of terrors after me, and I was casten into a sea and depth of hell many weeks: the work I was called to was so hard, that I durst not undertake it, but delayed it.

10thly, Another consideration, that cleared my call to me, was, that the ministers and faithful servants of Jesus Christ did solemnly examine my call, and after trial of my gifts and conversation by several exercises and pieces of trial recommended me, being intimately and of a long time acquainted with me, having preached frequently in their hearing, and having given proof of my gifts, were so far satisfied with me, that unanimously, without the least censure, they agreed to trust me in the name of Christ with the dispensation of the gospel; and this was in the year 1672. They were better judges than myself, and they found the Lord had called me, and therefore did in the name of Christ declaratively empower me to exercise the office of the ministry.

Lastly, When I consider the effects which followed on my admission to the ministry, I am much confirmed in my call; for by preaching, and discharging my duty otherwise, I myself was watered, my gifts increased, more of the Lord's
will

ill was manifested and made known to me, and my labours were blessed to many, to whose heart and case the Lord made me many times to speak: and tho', while I was in Scotland, I never received nor would take a sixpence for preaching, but lived upon what was my own; yet I prospered much in my outward estate in the world, I cleared my debts, I reserved some part of my estate to my debts, and maintained myself; I married all my sisters, insomuch that in fourteen years I was better by eight or nine hundred pounds Sterling than when I began, altho' there was never a week but I preached twice, and sometimes oftner. and this I looked upon as a token of the Lord's acceptance of my labours.

SECT. II.

Of a Minister's work and qualification.

IT was not merely to shew or discover my gifts, by letting people know what I could say from a text of scripture; that I was called; I had great inclinations of myself to preach and speak from scripture: nor was it to baptise or administer sacraments, nor was it the name or title of a Minister that I was to take on, or which I did affect most; God did not send me to baptise, but to preach. But that which I was called to was, to testify for God, to hold forth his name and ways to the dark world, and to deliver poor captives of Satan, and bring them to the glorious liberty of the sons of God: this was I to make my only employment, to give myself to, and herein to be diligent, taking all occasions; and to be plain, full and free in this charge. I was called to enter in hot war with the world and sinners,

thers. Example is very powerful ; and, where this is not, preaching and other labours are in vain ; for, without this, the most seriously delivered sermons are nothing in effect but a well-acted stage-play, 1 Theff. ii. 10. This was it that made the Apostles preaching so efficacious to the Theffalonians, that they perceived them to be of very holy conversation. *Ye know what manner of men we were for your sakes.* They illustrated by their practice, as by example, what they preached. All are bound to be holy, but ministers much more ; and their godly conversation is one of the ways they preach, and which many times doth convert. 1 Pet. iii. 2. some, not gained by the word, are gained by the conversation of their wives, or their believing relations. 5. They may discharge their commission by writing of epistles or treatises as the Lord shall call or enable them, and especially when there is no access to other means. Thus the Apostle Paul did write, when in prison, or when he could not get to them. Many breathings are lost for neglect of this, saith Mr. Shepherd. To all these five things I found myself called.

3dly, As to the nature of my particular call to preach the gospel ; by ought I can discern thro' the moving of God's Spirit, or the encouragement I had thereto, it was not to preach to any particular flock, gathered or ungathered ; but it was to preach to the whole world, especially my relations and acquaintances : my commission was much of the nature of that man's, Mark iv. *Go and shew thy friends what God hath done for thee.* The Lord then had scattered both shepherds and flocks ; we were then to preach wherever we could find people : yea, tho' I had three calls from three different societies of christians, yet did I

I not incline to fix with any, Mark xvi My commission, I thought, was rather indefinite than definite; *preach the gospel to every creature under heaven.* (2.) And hence I was called to preach in a vagrant manner, sometimes to one place, sometimes to another, here and there, up and down the country, as I was called by the people, not staying above a week in one place: so at Edinburgh, where my family was, where once every week-day, if at home, I preached a sermon, and on the Lord's day. I loved not fixed stipends and pulpits, while the Lord Jesus himself was unfixed; but thought it most kindly to follow the wandering Ark and Tabernacle. (3.) The chief things I was called to preach and declare were, man's misery by nature, the nature of regeneration and salvation by Christ, Ezek. xx. 4. Micah iii. 8. and my spirit did more freely go out in a gospel-strain than in a legal. I never in my sermons reflected upon the persons of rulers, or councils; neither laboured to stir up the people, nor did I insist ordinarily upon publick differences: but tho' I did sometimes (the Lord putting it in my mind and mouth) preach against the ungodly ministers the curates, the particular duties of the times; yet were the substantial truths of religion the more ordinary subject of my discourses, and it was *Christ and him crucified* that I was mostly called to preach. (4.) I was called (I say) more to preach by private exhortation, than by publick formal preaching; and to endeavour the conversion of some, and edification of others, by transient occasional discourses: and in the discharge of this I found more peace of conscience, greater sweetness and profit, than by preaching of many sermons; yet in this I was most defective, and to it had least inclination. I found a private-exhortation

hear what they say. Lastly, We can
without breach of law : we cannot do
without undergoing great suffering, and
to be frustrated ; and the Lord, by the
cy of the laws against these more forma
ings, seems to call us to see what private
ses may do. (5.) I was called to preach
particularly, and authoritatively as the
of Jesus Christ, with all sorts of pers
courteously, wisely, meekly, and gently
speak in a cloud of general words, but
the man, to reach home ; nor yet to spea
or slightly, but seriously and gravely, th
be revered and regarded by these to
is directed : for both we should speak
say, and they hear, as the word of G
withal wisely and meekly, shunning to
tation. (6.) I was called to serve God
gospel of his Son as my only and great
make this my trade and calling. in whi

that I might the better discharge my office, and confute adversaries, I was called to read some, and meditate on what I read. (8) To discharge the work of my calling in a special dependence on God, for light, life, assistance, wisdom, and a blessing. No calling, no work under heaven, wherein there is more need of dependence on God, as the work of the ministry: alas! we know neither what to say, nor how to say; *we are not sufficient for these things, but our sufficiency is of God.* Nor ought we to speak any thing but as the Lord giveth utterance. By this I perceive it is not every person, yea, every christian or saint, that is a fit and qualified person for the ministry; they must be polished shafts. Right interpreters are rare persons; *one of a thousand*, Job xxxiii. 23. Nay, very few of those who are called of men, are called of God to the ministry: for; 1. Ministers must be persons of good parts and endowments, able to convince and put to silence adversaries; they must have knowledge and learning more than others. 2. They must be saints and Christians e'er they be ministers; for how shall Satan cast out Satan? what do all gifts profit; if a man want grace or charity? is he not as a *tinkling symbal*? how shall such persuade others, who themselves never knew the terrors of the Lord? shall they tell others the way to heaven, that never themselves travelled that way? is not this for the *blind to lead the blind*? can a blessing be expected on the labours of such? I do not say that grace is essential to the ministry, but appearance of grace and serious profession is needful; and it is necessary to the *bene esse* of a minister. 3. He must have a more than ordinary stock and measure of grace, of knowledge, patience, zeal, experience, sobriety, watchfulness, faith; they can-

not without this be *one of a thousand*: he one acquainted in some measure with Sat vices, and with the corners of the little world. Heart. 4. A godly, heavenly pure and conversation and behaviour, to illustrate delivers in preaching, to exemplify a godly a clear confirmation of a minister's doctrine if it do not convert them, yet still it will comfort them: and when the conversation is comfortable of the doctrine preached, that man saith what he buildeth, he unpreacheth a futes what he preaches, and gives occasion people to think religion a stage-play. 5. The minister must have the sense of his charge, the of immortal souls deeply imprinted on him: it must be clear to him, that the Lord hath him, and to what he is called, and the weight import of his charge: it is a matter of death; hence the charge of prophesying, trusted to the prophets, is called a Burden. hath but slight impressions of his charge, never faithfully discharge it. 6. He must take pleasure in his work, be reconciled: he must not only be convinced that such is incumbent upon him, and be some way forward for the discharge of it; but his heart must be set to it, he must have a will to it, else his work will not be accepted: *with good-will doing the work as to the Lord, as if he meeteth him that rejoiceth and worketh in his work.* He that doth not so, will not long in it; hence there must be a desire in the office of a Bishop. Paul was affectionate towards the Thessalonians, and was striven with the Spirit till he had discharged his commission: *willing to spend and be spent for you.* 7. I be a prudent man; *be ye wise as Serpents, being cunning, I caught you with guile; he that*

reth souls is wise. There is a divine wisdom and prudence in *visiting of men for Christ*. 8. He must be a tender-hearted man, ready to sympathize with all that are in affliction either inward or outward, 1 Thess. ii. 7. be as a nurse to them. Compassion puts ministers to do much for the souls of people; and, when people see the compassion of ministers, it takes much with them. 9. They must always live near God, and depend on him for wisdom, courage and success; they must be, with Moses, much in the mount. 10. They must be bold courageous men, men of great zeal for God, *not afraid of the faces of men, but set their face as a flint*. 11. Humble persons, *bearing with much weakness and long suffering those that are out of the way*, Tim. ii. 25. Of all these qualifications I had some small measure, of some more, of some less, but of none what I ought to have.

SECT. III.

Observations and instructions from the aforesaid narration.

THE office of the ministry is an honourable employment. What a trust and an honour hath the Lord been pleased to confer on me, that he hath intrusted me with the charge of souls, and to be his Ambassador, and *Witness, and Apostle or Messenger for obedience to the faith among all nations.* *Unto me is this grace given, that I should preach the unspeakable riches of Christ.* 2. I perceive that I am bound to another kind of life than the rest of the world, to be holy in another manner than they; that, as the Lord hath set me in a more eminent place, so I should be more eminent in holiness, adorning the gospel: they that bear the effects of the Lord's house ought themselves to be

holy in a special manner. 3. A minist
and charge is very weighty ; they are
the very front of the battle against the
world, to declare the whole counsel
to them ; and they stake their souls for
their faithful discharge of their duty.
4. sorts of persons in the world, they have
the greatest need of dependence upon Christ for
strength ; for their work is far above t
ties, and therefore are they constantly
their eyes to the Lord for daily supplies
to their need. 5. I find I have great
been humbled for my shortcomings in sever
as, 1st, That I have never been so sens
tized with the great charge the Lord hath
I have condescended to take upon m
In that I have not applied myself wholl
things, nor given myself to word and
my only work. How much of my time
spent in not discharging any part of
3dly, I have been sadly entangled with
of this life, and my heart is so taken up w
that I had but little heart to my charge
I could not wholly look to these things.
I have not had that tenderness towards
souls, nor such sense of God's presence
ters I have been speaking of. 5thly, I
so depended for counsel, direction, stre
a blessing from God : I have spoken in
wisdom too much, and have not had
purely from God. 6thly, The duty of
exhortation much slighted ; many mean
vate conference, writing of letters towa
and edifying of souls, have been neglecte
My conversation hath not been so shi
convincing as became a Minister. 8thl
many times timorous and bashful, when

boldly have appeared against sin and for God. For these, with many sinful defects, I desire to mourn and be humbled before the Lord, and to seek mercy thro' the blood of Jesus Christ.

But, however I have great cause to be humbled for many sinful defects I have been sensibly convinced of, and to flee to the Lord Jesus his blood shed for the remission of sins for pardoning grace; yet I have the Lord to bless, and have great peace and comfort, for not a few things that thro' his grace I have attained: 1. That the Lord hath so far honoured me, as to call me to serve him in the gospel of his Son, who was educated and placed in another station in the world, and designed by my parents and friends for another business. 2. That the Lord was at such pains, by converting me once and again, by sore spiritual conflicts and exercises, desertions, lifting up and casting down, afflictions, persecutions, death of relations, temptations and trials, to qualify me in some measure for the ministry, and that for several years before I entered thereunto. 3. That the Lord did so wonderfully bless the little endeavours I used, and pains I took, for increasing my knowledge, improving my parts and gifts. 4. That I am in some measure not only called, but convinced of my call, to the ministry. 5. That I durst never preach any thing to others, but what I had some experience of in my own spirit: that I had myself walked in that way that I directed others to walk in: that I never gave a mark or sign of grace, but what I could say I found in myself: that I never started doubts, or endeavoured to loose them, but by these means and medicines the Lord's Spirit had formerly proposed and loosed them to myself; I only delivered what I received from the Lord Jesus. 6. That the Lord

not

not only commissioned me to preach and cry, but directed me always what to cry e'er I preached: every sermon I preached, I had it with some warmth and life from the Lord upon my own Spirit; and I durst never preach that sermon that I was not in some measure affected with in studying before I preached it. 7. That I never undertook the office of the ministry for filthy Lucre's sake in the least, refusing money for the space of twelve years, so that I had not a farthing from any upon that or any other account during all that time, but wholly maintained myself with my own estate; nor yet mostly or altogether from pride or vain-glory, but was desirous of the office to honour and serve Christ therein, and likewise to do all the good I could to poor sinners. 8. That my labours were not altogether in vain, but much accepted with gracious persons and others, and efficacious to not a few; and my repute was amongst the best, and honoured more both at home and abroad than I desired or deserved. Common people did repute me and love me, because I spoke to their capacities, and used similitudes; these that were more knowing had me in esteem, because I was full master of whatsoever I spoke; and many loved me, because I spoke of things that were little touched by others, viz. the difference betwixt law and gospel, freedom and absoluteness of the covenant, and some peculiar notions I had, which the most part did relish, but some again did so far mistake as to think I was a setter-forth of new opinions. 9. That I was in some measure endowed with all the qualifications needful to a minister, tho' I had but a small degree of some of them. 10. That my gifts, parts and graces sensibly increased, yea, and outward estate in the world, since I entered upon the work

of the ministry. 11. That as I sensibly found my own weakness and insufficiency to do ought for the Lord, so I have as sensibly found the immediate supply of the Spirit of grace enabling to discharge the duty of my calling in a gracious and comfortable manner. 12. I bless the Lord, whatever were my shortcomings and failings, I never dishonoured my calling by any scandalous sin; my conversation was truly, in some measure at least, suitable to my office. 13. That I was always on the Lord Jesus his side, and opposite to the Dragon and his party. 14. That he gave me to suffer for his truth, as well as to preach his truth; and that all the malice of adversaries did never make me change in principle, or comply in the least with them.

A Ministerial Call is God's command in his word to such as he hath gifted for that employment to serve him in the gospel, applied by the Spirit to the heart inwardly, and found and declared to be such by such as he hath appointed for that purpose, and received for that effect by his church. 2. The subject of this power is the Lord Jesus, from whom he receives it: but the church, consisting of spiritual officers and professed believers, are the instruments of application; the one by election, by which he is made minister of such a people; and the other by appointment or ordination. It is from Christ that all true ministers have their commission: but the Lord Jesus, the only chief bishop, appoints servants to see his commission; and, in case they discern it to be from Christ, are to publish the same. 3. It would seem that ministers ordaining and solemnly appointing a person to the work of the ministry, is much declarative of what Christ doth principally; as it is with an ambassador or herald who denounces war,

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it is his master who doth it, he but ministerially publishes and declares it, and at most he doth but instrumentally and ministerially denounce war.

4. Yet are not ministerial acts of preaching, ordaining, excommunicating, mere idle declarations, but have an instrumental causality, and are efficacious, producing effects; and hence we hear tell of *hewing by the prophets, and of the sword of Elisba, which should slay; Jeramiah is as fire, and the people as wood to be consumed.*

5. Yet it is not this by virtue of any natural, innate causality in the word preached, or other ordinance dispensed; but the Lord doth make use of the minister's declaration (for in itself it is no more) as a passive mean to do his will by; as a channel is said to convey the water into the sea, tho' it cannot put forth any active efficacy thereunto.

6. In some cases ministers have authority to preach, either by election or ordination: the want of any of these doth not annul a minister's office, the Lord conferring the power sometimes by ordination as the channel, and sometimes by election. Ordination, I think, makes a minister; or the Lord, by laying on the hands of the presbytery, doth confer a right to preach, and make a minister: and the election of a people doth make a man their minister.

7. As every christian who is baptised in any particular church, is baptised in the universal catholic church, and therefore hath right to a visible fellowship with it in all privileges; so he who is ordained a minister is a minister of the universal catholic church, and may exercise ministerial acts in any place of the world, may preach and administer the sacraments, and the like.

8. I suppose therefore, the practice of indefinite ordination is very warrantable, that is, of ordaining a minister tho' not to any particular charge, especially *in ecclesiis constituenda*

instituenda or *turbata*, where ministers cannot stay in one place, and where the universal confusion of the church doth call for help. In a constituted church, elders indeed are appointed in every city; for so the first ministers, apostles, seventy disciples, evangelists, were ordained; so Mr. Vislaert, Tindal, Bradford, Mr. Patrick Hamilton, and most of our extraordinary first reformers. No unqualified person, that is, no scandalous person, no ignorant or profane man, who is not able in some measure to convince the adversary, can be counted a minister in the court of heaven or of men: for God never calls such in his word to reach, whom he hath not someway fitted for the work; nor doth the Spirit of Christ apply this call to any but to such as are qualified: and if men call any who visibly appear not to be so qualified, as they may, and also too frequently do, it is *clavie errante*; this unqualified, so ordained is no minister, more than a woman ordained is to be esteemed a minister of Christ: for the same law, that discharges and interdicts the one interdicts the other. 10. The office and acts of such, as ordination and baptism, tho' in themselves null, yet they are effectual to godly persons, to whom their *uncircumcision becomes circumcision*; and therefore are not necessary to be retracted. The same I say of Popish priests, who are not ministers of Christ; the ordinances dispensed by them are all in themselves null, yet, to such as observe the law of circumcision, their *uncircumcision becomes circumcision*: and consequently, a Popish priest turning orthodox, and renouncing the great whore, and all Antichristian authority, there is no need he be re-ordained. 11. As there is no necessity of the re-ordination of such, nor of the re-baptizing of such as Popish priests or wicked scandalous ministers

do baptise; so, I think, the one may be re-ordained, and the other in case of scruple may be re-baptised. 12. There is no true ministry nor true ordinance of Jesus Christ in the Popish church, nor salvation in it as such. That work and employment, which the Lord doth call us to, is ordinarily that which we find our corrupt natures have most aversion to, and therefore most difficult; for Satan will stir up the greatest opposition thereunto, as we see in Moses and Jeremiah: therefore that part of the ministry your hearts have greatest aversion to, and seek most to shif, is that to which you are mostly called. (2.) As the foundation and ground of our call to believe on Christ is God's word, making it our duty to believe; so the ground and call of a person to the ministry is no other than God's word, such as this, *occupy till I come; every one, wherein he is called, let him walk with God.* (3.) Such as God calls to preach now, are not called to preach immediately: much less doth the call of God to preach, actually constitute them ministers; for then were they ministers before they were ordained or elected: but he is called to preach in such a manner, method and order, that is, by the ordination and election of the church; God will have his power to be conveyed to him in such a channel: he will have him indeed preach, but he will first have his gift and call tried; and when the servants of Christ have found the Lord to have called him, they are authoritatively in the name of Christ to injoin him to the exercise of his gift, and to publish the same to the people. (4.) Ministers ordinarily have great aversion to the work of the ministry, it being a difficult work, and a work above the strength of flesh and blood, and exposing to the hatred of all men: and such who find greatest in-

sufficiency

sufficiency in themselves, and are most sensible of their wants, are truly called of God; as Jeremiah, who cried he was a *child*. (5.) Therefore doth the Lord with the very office, or short time thereafter, bestow qualities and endowments fitting them for the service: as it is said of Saul, that the Lord did *give him a new heart* when he made him a King; the Lord many times in the very time of ordination, and thereafter, gives greater measure of grace and gifts to his servant. I cannot say but I found a sensible increase of knowledge, gifts and graces, from the very time of my setting out, altho' in the very act of ordination I did not find these gifts sensibly in me, or did not find such a change: there is something of this therefore in that expression, *the gift that was given thee by laying on of the hands of the Presbytery*. Some never find the furniture till they be engaged in the work; increase of gifts and graces therefore in a sign of God's call to the ministry, and seal thereof.

The Lord calls to and employs men in the work of the ministry, whom he never calls effectually to be saints: he makes many in some measure meet for the ministry, and useful to the church, who were never made meet for the kingdom of heaven, else Christ would never have called Judas to be an Apostle; altho' such usually discharge their office neither so successfully, painfully or comfortably, and, I am sure, never acceptably. 2. Tho' hypocrites and reprobates, whom the Lord Jesus doth make use of in the church, may be true and lawful ministers, yet cannot it be instanced that the Lord Jesus in old or new testament did ever commission a scandalous, insufficient or unqualified person, or one known to be a hypocrite, to serve him. 3. I many times

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found,

found, that when I thought I was most enlarged, and most sensibly assisted, either in preaching, or conference or prayer, I have done least good, there have not been such fruits; and, on the contrary, when I found greatest deadness and straitness in my spirit in ministerial exercises, I found I have done most good: to shew we should not trust in ourselves, but in the Lord, in whom alone is the blessing, and of whom alone is the efficacy of ordinances; and to encourage ministers under indispositions, and *out of season*, to be always doing; for they may do most good when they think themselves least fitted for any such thing.

4. Sometimes, in the distempers of spirit, I have said, I will retire and mend my nets, and for sometime *hear what the Lord will say to me*, and not open my mouth to speak to others: I have then found it never worse with me, and my corruptions and my confusions to grow stronger upon me; so that I have been forced to alter my resolutions, and appear in publick; and by studying of preachings, and by preaching of them, I have sensibly found a cure of my spiritual distempers: nor, next to prayer, do I find any thing more quickning than studying a sermon, and endeavouring after a preaching frame, and to hear what God would have me to say.

5. Before I engaged with the office of the ministry, I was engaged in a multiplicity of affairs, intangled and burdened with great debts on my Father's account, and several intricacies, which made me for some time delay my entering into the ministry: but, when I delayed, matters grew worse; and, since I resolved, the Lord hath been pleased to deliver me out of all my intricacies, so as I may without being burdensome to any, or great distraction, attend upon my work; which is a very great encouragement

couragement to me. 6. I many times am employed in business for others, against my will truly; but ordinarily nothing that I meddle in of others' concerns, if it be a civil business, doth prosper: and yet I prosper in all my own affairs, except when I am excessively and unseasonably taken up. 7. As discharging of my duty faithfully is my generation's work; so I look upon my great neglect and omissions of, and slowness in, this work of the ministry, to be as it were my only evil, the foundation of any breaches in my soul: here, when I reform, must I begin. 8. I seldom preach as I ought, or to my own contentment, but after sermons see need of fleeing unto the blood of sprinkling for pardon, and before this altar to mourn, grieve and be humbled, and seek to preach better and more holily, and to be under a greater sense of what I preach, and whose words I preach, and of these to whom I speak. 9. I find multiplicity of points, tho' counted material preaching and quick speaking not so refreshing to my soul, or profiting to others, as a few points well pressed and insisted upon, and gravely and slowly delivered: and therefore of late I use but slow delivery, and a few points. 10. I can speak with better utterance in prayer than in preaching. 11. I usually, especially when in a good frame, *use many similitudes*. 12. God doth not call all to the ministry in a like manner: as some, and ordinarily most, are very unwilling to undertake the charge, and therefore must be *thrust out*, as the word is; so others do express more willingness, readiness and inclination to it: hence some are said to desire the office of a Bishop; and Isaiah saith, send me, and offers himself to go; whereas Moses and Jeremiah are hardly brought over. 13. Ordinarily, before a

minister's closing with the work of the ministry, there is an exercising of the person with great and various temptations, and regeneration (as one calls it) that the person, as it were, passes under a new work of conversion, of conviction of sin, and pardon and justification intimated unto his conscience, without which a gracious soul will be very loth to engage in such a work. So Isaiah was really humbled under a sense of guilt, and made to cry out, until by a comfortable voice he be assured that his iniquity is pardoned and himself justified. 14. There is not only need of a gift and endowment to preach, but great need of the actual breathing of the Spirit to stir up and excite the gift that is in them; without which, tho' the Lord has been pleased to give some small measure of talents, yet can they not preach more than a child. 15. To draw souls to, and build them up in Christ Jesus, is and ought to be the great end and scope of all faithful ministers. Christ is the Alpha and Omega of preaching, he is the centre where all the lines ought to meet; and, where Christ is not the sense and life of preaching, we lose the text. 16. No secret or mystery is more needful, and a minister should be versed in or acquainted with, than the depth of the covenant of grace, Christ and faith, the promises and the law.

CHAP. X.

Of my Marriage, and the Lord's Providence towards me during the time of my Marriage, which was in the year 1672, and for sometime thereafter.

AT that time the church of Christ had great rest and liberty from persecution through variance amongst the statesmen, and preachers
were

were frequent; yea, the curates were beginning to leave their pulpits, and I was as busy as I could amongst others, and in August had gone north, and dispatched some business there; the most was to take course with some debts: I returned south, but a violent persecution had broken out, and then there began to be fining, imprisoning, taking and summoning of persons, disturbing of conventicles with soldiers. But yet the gospel prevailed more and more, and we were like the Israelites in Egypt, *the more we were afflicted, the more we grew and multiplied*. Some hot-heads were for taking the sword, and redeeming of themselves from the hands of oppressors; at least I had ground to fear it: but I opposed rising in arms all I could, and preached against it, and exhorted them to patience and courageous using of the sword of the Spirit; and I did not see they had any call to the sword, that their *strength was to sit still*: and, if they did stir and take the sword, they would therewith perish; but, if they patiently suffered and endured, God would himself either incline to pity, or some other way support and deliver them. I had influence with the people, being popular; and, whilst I was at liberty, I did what I could to keep the people peaceable. The truth is, there were great provocations given, so that we concluded it was the design of some rulers to stir us up that we might fall. Ministers still preached and laboured amongst the people, conventicles increased, many were brought in; the work of God in the midst of persecution did always prosper, until we destroyed ourselves, first by needless divisions and differences in opinion happening by reason of the indulgence, and thereafter by rash and unwarrantable taking up of arms most unseasonably in the year 1679; when the

dissenting party, a good number of them meeting at a conventicle to worship God, being assaulted by armed men, and defending of themselves, did kill about thirty men of their enemies : with this success both engaged and heartned, great numbers gathered together, but not in the Lord's strength ; and there, by their unseasonable divisions, and folly of some, they were made a prey to their enemies ; as is fully known. The persecution became so hot in the latter end of the year 1674, and beginning of 1675, and always after that, that sometimes I was in hazard to be taken preaching. It was then I was intercommuned, with some other ministers, gentlemen and women, yea, some persons of quality ; but the Lord suffered not this ball, tho' it hit me, to do me harm : the gospel still spread, and the people of all sorts ventured on converse with the intercommuned persons. *O let my soul bless the Lord, and not be forgetful of his benefits ; let me not conceal his loving-kindnesses, but shew them to the sons of men.* Altho' the Lord afflicted me, and kept the cross still upon my back, as I said ; yet did he likewise remember mercy, his mercies were *renewed every morning* to me. And, 1st, the Lord shewed his mercy to me, in giving me a comfortable and suitable yoke-fellow, who did me good and not evil all the days of her life : in her did I behold as in a glass the Lord's love to me, by her were the sorrows of my pilgrimage many times sweetned, and she made me frequently forget my sorrows and griefs, and was the greatest temptation to me of saying, *It is good for me to be here ;* so that I can seal to the truth of that, *An inheritance is from the fathers, but a good prudent wife is from the Lord, and whoso findeth her obtaineth favour of the Lord.* I had not in herself alone a comfortable relation, but I had

very much love and respect from all her relations; which were many, and in whose fight I found favour, that they considered me no longer as a stranger, but as their brother, and there was nothing but in what I could command them; and many of them being Lawyers, Advocates, Clerks and Judges, I had their service for nought, and glad were they to do me any good; by them I obtained several things, and warded off several blows: nor did their love die with her, but continued constant to this day, as ready to pleasure and do for me now as ever; nor know I so much as of any one breach that ever was betwixt us. She was kindly, the *law of kindness* was in her mouth; she was prudent and well bred, ordered her affairs with great discretion, and by her wisdom and activity did many things that were fair and lovely to look on; was truly religious, and not only would comply with me in any good work and spiritual duty, but many times would assist, stir up, and encourage and remember me of my duty. 2dly, I found much preserving mercy from the Lord. I was in great debts when I married; some considerable sums of money was I bound in, others I was not bound in, but yet were truly owing, but was not able to pay them, being my Father's debt: had those creditors fallen then upon me whiles I was yet tender, they might have undone me, made my life and my wife's very uncomfortable to me; but such as I was owing to, the Lord was pleased to restrain, that they did not proceed for their money until I was able to pay them; nor did others stir at all of my creditors, tho' I had fears they might arrest money belonging to my wife, her interest at least; yet none ever moved. Some tried to do something by law, but I prevailed against them; and my
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cause seemed so just to the judges, that they could not harm me ; so that they agreed with me on what terms I pleased, which was, to pay them what and when I was able, and how I was able. Likewise, 3dly, The Lord was so gracious to us, as altho' I had no gainful employment, nor ever received a sixpence for preaching whilst in Scotland, nor a gift from any relation or friend, that yet, by the blessing of the Lord on our management, I discharged a great burden of debt without wronging my estate a sixpence. In that four years and an half's time, I cleared seven or eight hundred pounds Sterling of debt, which by several obligations I was owing to several persons, and did settle a debt, which betwixt principal and annualrent amounted to eight hundred pounds, for two hundred. My own estate was not above one hundred, my Mother and publick duties had yearly thirty five or forty pounds of it, it was not all well paid ; I had with my wife sixty five pounds annuity, besides one hundred pounds of stock ; but it is true we got in above five hundred pounds of a desperate debt we looked not for. 4thly, I looked on it as a piece of great mercy, that I had by my marriage better and greater occasions of serving the Lord and his people in the service of the gospel ; for, living for the most part in the south with my wife, I had frequent calls to preach both in the cities and country, so that few weeks passed that I did not preach twice a Lord's day, and once every week besides, and sometimes oft, and always to great multitudes, so several hundreds in the cities, and thousands in the country, being much followed where they knew me : there was not such a door opened in the north. 5thly, I increased in grace, knowledge and gifts while married, both by exercising my talents faithfully,

and having the opportunity of hearing the best-gifted men in Scotland, by whom I profited both as a Christian and as a minister; and likewise by providences of mercy and judgement shown me. Monthly, Many experiences had I of the Lord's goodness in delivering me out of great straits; as in sparing my wife to me when in great straits and at the gates of death, twice in delivering me from the hands of the enemies; tho' intercommuned, yet thereby received no damage; tho' sought out to be imprisoned, yet was hid; and, when such as intended to apprehend me were come in where I was preaching, three several times was I preserved from them wonderfully; money likewise to supply wants, and credit was cast in to me wonderfully: especially at two several times, when, if a great sum had not been gotten, I might have been broken, and my friends with me; but the Lord lent me, in stirring up some of whom I did not expect it at all, without any motion of mine, to offer money freely to me, and more than would do my turn. I had likewise experiences of the Lord's hearing of my prayer very remarkably. And, finally, the Lord was pleased to bless me with children; and, I bless the Lord, he helped me in some measure to carry christianly in a married relation, making conscience of private duties, having sometimes very sweet and heart-refreshing fellowship betwixt me and my wife alone, seeing and feeling much of the Lord's goodness vented to me whiles in that relation, doing nothing, and watching against what might stain my credit or authority either as a minister or a Christian, being preserved from gross pollutions thro' the mercy of the Lord. And yet I desire to be humbled, to the justifying of God, and abasing of myself, for great shortcomings and failings, of which I was
both

both in the time and since convinced ; as, 1. I was not so useful and profitable to my wife, family and relations as I should and might have been ; many one opportunity had I, which I nowise improved ; I cannot tell if any of them hath got good by me ; I was not as the dew to them. 2. I was not spiritual but very carnal, in the use and enjoyment of lawful comforts ; had many times a sensual carnal frame, and designed no spiritual end therein : I did not, *wherein I was called*, walk so closely with the Lord as I should and might. 3. I was by the pleasures and satisfaction I found in a married condition turned off in my affections and longings after heaven, and now I began to see a greater good on earth than before, and was in my heart saying, *It is good to be here* ; my heart was glewed to sublunary enjoyments, and much taken off Christ. 4. I did sometimes perform family-duty but slightly, and on haste neglect and omit the same sometimes, and omitted reading, and speaking from the word, and catechising ; yea, and omitted many occasions of spiritual fellowship with my wife, altho' the time spent that way, and our fellowship that way, was the sweetest part of our married life.

CHAP. XI.

Of my widowhood, and the Lord's Providences during that time ; together with observations upon my marriage and widowhood.

AND now there was an end put to my earthly joys, my sun of earthly prosperity was set, and my nights and *days of darkness*, and the *years wherein I had no pleasure in them*, were come ; our sun must be overclouded sometimes. Four years

and a quarter did I live in a married condition, *rejoicing with the wife of my youth* in the days of my youth, that is, from the latter end of July to the latter end of October 1676, at which time must I be a widower; for then did the Lord, *take away from me the delight of mine youth, and with her all earthly joys.*

I cannot say but the Lord gave me some warning of this before it came to pass. I was threatened in the year 1673 with this, but the Lord spared me for that time, but it was a mere suspensiveness, like a storm, that summer before she died, I was in the north to settle some affairs; but a great damp was upon my spirit, by which my mind was overwhelmed with an unknown load of sorrow, and continued for the space of two whole years.

I hardly during that time could speak, eat, or sleep, nor knew I any cause for it; as it came upon me without any cause, so within two days it wore off again. Now these clouds upon my spirit are always forerunners of a sharp and bitter trial to blow upon me: the sense I many times have of my sinful course of life, my short-coming, my distance from God, my not improving the mercies that God gave me, did many times, with a deep impression upon my spirit, presage the evil that was coming; yea, the extraordinary light and comforts of my sun did tell me always before a storm was coming; for truly the goodness of the Lord to me, was a great temptation to fear. How frequently have I said to myself, O how do I fear, *the prosperity of fools shall destroy me!* I perceive all the people of God that

are visited with sorrow upon sorrow, I see affliction in the *tabernacles of Jacob*; only I see increase in riches, children; have health, peace and quietness, respect from others, what is that? Oh, surely, if the Lord loves me, I am not a bastard, a stranger that hath no lot

or part with the people of God, surely I shall not be suffered to walk in a world alone, but shall mourn with Zion; this world shall not hold. Thus did I many times commune with my own soul, and, as Job said, *I was not at peace nor quietness, yet trouble came; and, the evil I greatly feared was come upon me.* Either, if the Lord loves me (said I) God will send some painful sickness or blast upon my estate, or I shall fall into the hands of the ungodly, or my wife shall be taken from me; some awakening or other I shall have, that I know. And accordingly, in the beginning of October 1676, having a call to Northumberland in order to do something (which, after I enquired the Lord, I was free to do) my wife sickened of a fever, and some eight or nine days thereafter she died, in vain calling for me during a great part of the time of sickness, who was then some fifty or sixty miles from her, and knew nothing; letters were sent to me, but came too late, only a day before she died; and having made what haste I could after once I understood she was sick, I came and found her dead some hours before. I indeed remember I was, when absent at that time, stirred up extraordinarily to mind her in prayer; and, about the very time she was a dying, an extraordinary cloud of horror seized upon me, being then within twelve miles of my journey to our own house.

Observations upon my Marriage and Widowhood.

IT is good for either man or woman to be first married and engaged with Christ e'er they be engaged with any other, otherwise we shall never carry well in a marriage-state: when once the heart

heart hath made its choice, it is hardly brought to chuse Christ; and therefore our days of youth are days of choice, in which we are to *remember our Creator*, Eccl. xii. 1. The Lord was merciful to me, in engaging me with Christ e'er I settled any other way, Mat. vi. ult. *seek ye first the kingdom of heaven*. 2. It is not convenient, I think, that people not come to the years of discretion should marry; I was thirty two years of age when I married, and needed all the wisdom and experience that by age I acquired to manage a married lot. 3. As in all our ways we should acknowledge the Lord, so especially in going about marriage, that we may marry *in the Lord*. For many years before I had thoughts of marriage, I earnestly besought the Lord, that ever if I should change my relation and manner of living, that he would give me a comfortable yoke-fellow: and, when the Lord opened a door, I durst not so much as make a visit without prayer; and I set a whole day apart before I did propose marriage to my wife, to know the Lord's mind whether I should go on or not, and to seek his blessing in case I should see it of the Lord to go on. 4. The great end of marriage is to get a *meet help* for furthering of the soul's condition and spiritual concernment: we are not therefore to match ourselves any way but such as may be conducive to that end; other ends and advantages are to be subordinate to this. 5. Therefore doth it much concern us, that the person we marry be a prudent, pious and virtuous person: fools, or graceless persons, we can never expect to be helpful to us this way; it is dreadful to take a lump of wrath in our bosom. He that marrieth a prudent, godly woman, is sure to have the Lord himself to his father-in-law. The seed of the woman and of the

serpent can never agree, dwell, and walk together; nor can an Ox and an Afs, yoked together, draw equally. 6. It is absolutely necessary that those we marry be persons of good moral parts, and especially that they be not of a cross but good humour naturally, and that they have some good measure of prudence; without these two you cannot live comfortably: yea, grace, tho' I confess it makes fools (even naturally so) wiser, and makes the rugged Lions eat grass like Oxen, yet it doth not destroy nature; and, if there be not the stricter watch, it will vent, and cause disorders in the family. That we live religiously, and to God, we owe it to grace; but that, as men and women, we live in external peace, and comfortably, is much from prudence and good natural humour. 7. It is a marvelous and a blessed thing, where God is pleased to unite in the bonds of love first these he in his providence is pleased to join in marriage: this is the blessing of the Lord upon a marriage-condition; this is it which makes the married walk faithfully, in sweet spiritual communion with God, in joint spiritual duties and exercises, and which makes it so comfortable; and this I found by experience. I found much sweetness in spiritual fellowship with my wife; the pleasantest time we ever had was these few hours we spent together in prayer, in reading the word, and the making of observable things out of it, in spiritual conference, and joint binding of ourselves to the Lord, in all which I found her very cordial; nor can I say I found fellowship with any other so sweet as with her. What a great advantage is it, and how necessary, to be united by love with these with whom we join in fellowship! 8. Grace makes persons not only good Christians, but good in all relations. To say, a

good

good woman, but a bad wife; a gracious man, but a mighty cross, peevish, fullen husband; a holy man, but a wonderfully bad master, or undutiful servant, is that which I truly think cannot be: and however some have very confidently endeavoured to make it out to me by several instances; yet truly, whatever may be truth in it, I could never yet see through or understand how it could be. 9. Marriage is one of the most important steps of a man's life: O then, with what fear and trembling and godly dependence should we go about such a matter! I shall never forget what a minister said when marrying two persons, viz. that repentance mends all things but an ill-made marriage; it is either a mean of the greatest comfort or sorrow. 10. If any person be uncomfortably yoked. To marry an ill, cross and rugged person is indeed grievous; but it may be and has been blessed of God as the mean of greatest good. Thus, I thought, I was thereby encouraged against the terrible effects of a bad choice; well, said I, if I fall not well, sure I am I shall thereby have the best opportunity and advantage to be mortified to the world that ever I had, and an ill wife may do that good for me which all my former afflictions could not do. 11. I have observed, that several gracious persons have been very unequally yoked with graceless persons, and that to be the sad lot rather of poor women than of men; and yet this hath been blessed of God to them, and they helped to carry well under it. 12. A marriage-condition or state is both a blessed and comfortable state, and also a state liable to many inconveniences; I found this fountain to *send forth bitter and sweet*. As it was a life of much contentment, and as I saw much of the love and goodness of God, so did I see the same seasoned

with many ingredients, cares, and vexing fears, that I never found in a single state; so that, if I were absent for four or five days, it was a terror to me to enter into the family, lest I should hear or know that either wife or children were unwell.

13. Altho' marriage be ordained for preventing of fornication and burning lust, 1 Cor. vii. 4. and for begetting of children to furnish the church with an holy seed, yet are they not the only great ends of marriage; for aged persons that cannot get children, and such as never found these violent desires, may lawfully marry, and that for the great end of marriage, which is to have a suitable help, a suitable companion, who may in our pilgrimage be comfortable to us, and help us in our way to heaven. 14. Altho' increase of wealth or paying of debts be the ordinary great end of marriage, with continuance of our names; yet do I think it the meanest of ends: and just it is (as ordinary) with God to make the marriage of such uncomfortable, and to deprive them of the true comforts and blessings thereof, who hath their eyes so much thereupon. This I may say, riches were not my aim, having preferred her whom I have married to several with greater portions, and in other things not inferior to her, save only in virtue and piety. 15. It is a very hard thing to guide a marriage-lot, and to walk prudently and in knowledge, to keep such a spiritual frame as to possess our vessels in holiness, and, like Enoch, to beget sons and daughters, and walk with God. Alas! I know not how to walk perfectly in a perfect way, nor how to behave wisely in my house: I many times omitted opportunities of doing good, slighted others; many times slightly and perfunctoriously went about family-duties, was carnal and excessive, was foolish in many things; yea, the
comforts

comforts of a present life, wife, children and relations, did blunt my desire after heaven, and I began to say in my heart; *It is good to be here.* 16. Overvalued comforts are shortned, and a worm comes and consumes them, so that they wither to the ground. 17. Loss of comforts is as bitter, yea, much more than ever they were comfortable when enjoyed. As I much comforted myself in such a comfortable yoke-fellow, so it was exceeding bitter when the Lord withered such a gourd, Jonah iv. 6, 7. 17. Mercies obtained by, and received as the fruit of prayer, are double mercies. What was comfortable and useful to me in a yoke-fellow, I obtained by prayer. 18. I think it a greater sin to marry on the Lord's day than to yoke a plough, inasmuch as the work and concern is greater; and I judge it to be one of the provoking profanations of the Lord's day, the sinful continuance of this; and I seldom ever see these marriages blessed that were celebrated on that day: they must be strangely mortified creatures, that do not *find their own pleasures that day.* I never durst do, or advise to it. I am hardly free for ministers to marry persons: to give them exhortations, and to seek a blessing upon them, I think very commendable; but to minister in the action, ceremony and rite, which is the badge of that relation, I think is no more competent to him, than to give a sabbine in land. Yet as times go now, I think it not altogether unlawful to marry by a minister; but it were to be wished this and other things were reformed, which as they are relicks of Popery, so do they tend to beget in us an opinion of marriage being a sacrament, seeing ministers only administer it; and commonly people think, that if ministers do not marry them, *that they are not married at all: and this live-*

wife begets the marrying on the Lord's day, seeing they take it for some spiritual action, performable only by ministers. Other things I might observe, but, fearing tediousness, I here end this chapter.

CHAP. XII.

Of my sufferings.

SECT. I.

Of my public sufferings in general.

IT pleased the Lord, not only to exercise me with personal afflictions; but likewise, for purging away and healing of my corruptions, for trial and exercise of my faith, patience and sincerity, for humbling of me, and for manifesting his purity and holiness, and for confirmation and sealing of God's truth and ways, to honour me with publick sufferings for his name; by being reproached, oppressed and wronged, intercommunicated, troubled with citations before courts on that account, wandring from place to place many times for fear of my life, imprisoned, fined and banished, and threatned with death itself.

The cause and occasion of my sufferings was, dissenting from, and nonconformity to the government of Prelacy in the church; for not coming to church to hear such ministers and officers as did officiate by an unlawful (to me) authority; for adhering to the persecuted, deserted party, who stood upon their former ground, cleaving to their former principles; and for taking upon me to preach without the Bishop's authority. This in short time exposed me to the lash of the laws
against

against dissenters, and malice of the Bishops, whose principles, ways, courses and office I was convinced were not of God, and by instinct was averse to : for as to any other thing, whether immorality or sedition, I could not be charged therewith, being as to man unblamable, of sufficiently loyal principles, and kept from having hand in or concurrence with any publick insurrection that was ; so that there was nothing that could be laid to my charge but as concerning my God and conscience.

It is true, the very profession of religion did expose me to persecution, viz. to reproach and contempt, and made me not willing to bring my cause before their corrupt judicatories, choosing rather to suffer by unprofitable terms of peace, than to bring my cause before them to be heard publickly ; for I knew both my person and principles were unfavourable, and therefore doubted much of the issue of my cause.

Hitherto my troubles reached none but myself ; but now, being married, they reached others : for within a very few days after we were married, and were preparing to go to the north, a messenger came with a summons to me to appear before the council for keeping of conventicles. The Bishop of Murray in whose diocly I had preached, and a privy counsellor, for some pick he had at my wife, did cause me this trouble. I was herewith troubled ; but my wife's friends, to whom I communicated the matter, dealt with the messenger to take off his summons, and to lay on a new summons when we were to the north, where we were to be in a day or two, and then indorse on the back of his execution, that he found us not, which would make a new summons necessary ; and he *did so*. My adversaries were enraged at this, and, *disdaining*.

disdaining to be thus outwitted, caused send one hundred and sixty miles a new summons, which, within two months after we were come north, came to our hand : I was therewith much troubled on my wife's account, fearing that the publick would seize upon any thing belonging to her ; however, I prayed to the Lord, and sought advice what to do, whether I should answer the council's citation (as my friends advised me) or not, and take my hazard. The Lord was pleased to clear it to me, that I was not to answer the citation, which light I followed ; upon which I was denounced and outlawed. My wife was very cheerful under this. Within a short time thereafter we came south ; and then, understanding who were the authors of my troubles, I thought it wisdom to take them off ; and, for this effect, employed such as had greatest influence with the privy counsellor to deal with him to abstain from such a matter and action so far below him, I likewise came myself and spoke to him ; and the Lord blessed the means used so effectually, that he fell off, putting all the blame on the Bishop, and was ever thereafter a good friend to me ; and, having the executions delivered him, he would never give them up, by which means they came to nothing, and finally were altogether forgotten.

After this there was *silence in heaven for half an hour*, but then the Angels of war did sound their trumpets : and amongst other ministers was I sought for, and of new denounced ; was many times, while in the south, made to shift my lodging ; was frequently in fears and alarms, and preached in great temptations thro' the lying in wait of enemies ; was several times interrupted in the very act of preaching by soldiers that by orders came to apprehend me ; I could get no business

ness done. The Lord by this did only manifest his goodness in preserving and delivering me, rendering enemies who did forbid us to preach inexcusable, by this causing them fill up the measure of their iniquities ; my spirit by these tossings was rather distempered and jumbled than bettered.

SECT. II.

Of my being intercommuned.

THE Bishops and other wicked man perceiving all this time that they *laboured in the fire*, for the number of Dissenters increased, and the gospel spread further and further notwithstanding of all the violent means that were used for suppressing it and the professors thereof, they bethink themselves of intercommuning the chief ministers that were most active in preaching, and the chief professors both gentlemen and others, to the number of between three or four hundred in the first or second intercommuning. It was a publick writ, served by King and council's authority, straitly discharging, under highest pains, all his Majesty's Subjects to converse or speak with, harbour or receive into their houses, or administer any comfort to, the persons in the writ particularly expressed ; this was proclaimed and printed : and thus for naked preaching were we process'd as murderers and traitors, for such were only in use to be intercommuned. They thought this would keep the people from us, or force us, finding no shelter, to remove out of the land ; and make us as ducks to decoy others, who, could they be proven to have received or harboured us, were fineable at the council's pleasure, and to be

in the same circumstances which we were in ourselves. I was through the malice of the Bishops put in with others ; for they knew that I was against the very hearing of their ministers, and had several times preached in the fields, and was very popular ; they imagined also my parts were greater than they were : and therefore, tho' some friends dealt that I might not be intercommuned, yet could not prevail ; the Bishops would have it so.

Altho' this seemed to be the first storm of persecution that yet had fallen upon us, and that now the adversaries had boasted of an effectual mean for suppressing conventicles, and establishing Prelacy and uniformity, and that good people feared it ; yet the Lord did wonderfully disappoint them, and made and turned their witty counsels into folly ; for this great noise harmed not at all, it was powder without ball : for, as for myself, never one that cared for me shunned my company ; yea, a great many mere carnal relations and acquaintances did entertain me as freely as ever they did ; yea, so far did the goodness of the Lord turn this to my good, that I observed it was at that time I got most of my civil business expedite : and as the Lord preserved myself in this storm, so I did not hear of any intercommuned, or conversers with intercommuned persons, that were in the least prejudiced thereby ; nay, this matter of the intercommuning of so many good and peaceable men did but exasperate the people against the Bishops the more, and procured to them, as the authors of such rigid courses, a greater and more universal hatred ; so that the whole land groaned to be delivered from them.

SECT. III.

Of my first imprisonment in the Bass.

SOME two years and a half did I continue intercommuned, discharging the commission I had received from the Lord Jesus in great weakness, I confess (yet desiring to serve the Lord better, and humbled and grieved upon the account of my great failing) and in manifold temptations thro' the lying in wait of these who hunted after me : for the Bishops knowing that I was a rigid nonconformist, who had not freedom to have any spiritual communion with their church, and that I laboured to keep some halting betwixt two opinions, from joining with them, and to divert others from their (supposed by me) most sinful communion; and imagining me to be of some parts, and very active in preaching in the fields, and keeping up the secession as they called it; they therefore did stir up the King's council against me, representing me to them as a person of very disloyal principles and practices; so as there was a particular eye upon me, and I was one of the three that a considerable sum of money was profered for apprehending of, to any person, altho' nothing could be laid to my charge of Sedition or insurrection, but only that I preached without the Bishops authority, and had influence to keep such of the nation as I had influence upon, or conversed with, from going alongst or joining with the publick courses established by law. Many attempts were made against me, which for some years I escaped : at last the Major of the town of Edinburgh, being solicited by the Archbishop, and encouraged and importuned thereto

by the promises of great rewards and acknowledgments, did on the Lord's day's night, being the 28th January 1677, by the treachery of a servant maid whom for money he had corrupted, who, being a servant-maid to a relation in whose house I ordinarily preached, had knowledge of my coming and going; thus betrayed, I was apprehended by the said Major about ten o'clock at night which was the time the maid had appointed him to come to her master's house where I was for that day, as I was, after supper, recommending the house and family to God by prayer; I was then interrupted and carried to prison. I did not think fit to resist, lest some friends and relations which were with me might be made to suffer.

He who apprehended me went immediately to the Archbishop; and told him the news of my apprehension, with which the Archbishop was greatly rejoiced, and, by giving some small token at present, and promises of greater reward, dismissed the Major. The Archbishop, overjoyed with his imaginary success and prosperity in apprehending me, longed for the next day impatiently, on which, so soon as it did dawn, he (being a counsellor) sent order to the Jaylor that I should be kept close, and none suffered to have access to me, which was done, until some of the counsellors in a committee met the same night, before whom at five o'clock at night I appeared, where I was examined, and verbally charged as a seditious person, who did rent the church of Christ, and was very active to make and keep up the schism; as a preacher in field-conventicles, which was death by the law; which they gladly would have me acknowledge, as likewise who they were that empowered me to preach: that I was intercommuned, and despised the law so far as I
never

never made any application to be freed from that sentence: and that I was a person of very bad principles, destructive to all government. And thereupon the Archbishop, who thereby thought to ensnare me by my own words, enquired, whether I judged it lawful upon pretence of religion to take up arms against the King's Majesty? this was the sum: and that I kept correspondence with some prisoners in the Bass, which the Archbishop confidently averred he knew. These things were not charged upon me all at once, but in a confused way; and many things by way of question. I cannot say of any of the committee of the council, but they were all civil and sober persons, of whom, if the instigation and fear of the Archbishop had not prevailed with them, I might have been moderately dealt with: but he did, in a bitter invective oration, represent me as a very odious and criminal person to the other counsellors, and aggravated my alledged crimes vehemently. To all which I replied, that I did acknowledge I was (tho' most unworthy) a minister of the gospel; and that I indeed preached frequently, as the Lord called me, and independently on the Bishop: that the Subjects of my discourses and sermons were not disloyal and traitorous principles and assertions, as the Archbishop did alledge, but, according as I was helped, I preached *repentance towards God, and faith towards Jesus Christ*, and no other thing than what was contained in the prophets and the New Testament: that I was so far from being terrified or ashamed to own that I was a minister of Christ, that altho' I was of no despicable extraction, yet that I gloried most in, and counted it the greatest honour I ever attained, to *serve God in the gospel of his Son*: that I never preached nor stirred up the people to sedition, and

was indifferent tho' the principles of my heart were as visible and perceptible to their Lordships as the external lineaments and tracts of my face, so as they might read what was engraven upon my heart: that for rising up in arms against the King upon pretext or pretence of religion, which the Archbishop alledged I maintained, I told him he was therein abused by his inferiors; for I never knew of any, even the most zealous asserters of the liberties of the people, that did maintain rising in arms upon pretence of religion, pretences giving no ground or warrant for any man's action: that matters of prerogative and privileges were things of a ticklish and thorny nature, and of which for the present I desired not to give my thoughts, not judging the same within my sphere now, nor called to meddle with: that, for such as did ordain me, I was not free to tell them, lest thereby I should bring others to trouble, altho' I should be most free as to matters concerning myself: that as I judged it not unlawful to preach the gospel either in houses or fields as conveniency did offer, but duty, and an ordinance of Christ's (so far was I from judging those meetings *rendevouz*es of rebellion, as the Archbishop termed them) so did I not acknowledge I at any time did preach in the fields; and if they thirsted after my life, to take it away upon that account, they could not expect I should give or reach the weapon wherewith to destroy myself, or that I should be either witness or accuser against myself, in a matter the law had made so criminal; and therefore for them to seek their proof and evidence elsewhere than from myself, for I was resolved none living should be able to make me guilty of such a weakness: that as for correspondence with any in the Bas, which the Archbishop alledged, I declared, that, notwithstanding

withstanding the Bishop's bold and confident asserting the contrary, there was no such thing; and, if there were, I should be content to suffer the severest punishments: I denied the charge of schism, and left it to be proven by the Bishop: that, for my intercommuning, I was then seven-score miles off when it was passed, and knew not of it, till I saw my name in the printed papers; and so could not prevent it; and, after I was intercommuned, I could not get any person that would so much as draw a petition up for me; being strictly charged to the contrary; and that from this, and fear of further prejudice, and not from the contempt of the law, it was that I did not move to have myself taken out of the letters of intercommuning. In this and in all the premises I was free and ingenuous with them; that I came not to justify my breeding before their Lordships, for I acknowledged I was a rude man (for one of the Lords challenged me of unmannerliness and ill-breeding that gave not the Archbishop his titles.) And finally, that I was now in their Lordships power, and ready to submit to whatsoever their Lordships should determine concerning me.

After this I was remanded to prison again, but ordered to be kept more straitly than formerly: for my pockets were searched for letters, knives; ink, paper and pen were taken and kept from me; all company discharged: which filled me with some melancholly apprehensions. But in my darkness was the Lord a light round about me; him they could not shut out from me: for that night did I get a most kindly and comfortable visit from the Lord Jesus, and I had one of the most sweet nights I had for ten years before that; and lifted up, by the sense of the Lord's love and favour, above Death, Sin, Hell, Wrath, Prelates,



10, with another person that was prisoner, was I by a guard of twelve horse and foot convoyed to the Bass, where we fast upon Wednesday morning (being one night way) and were delivered to the custody of the Officer of that place, who commanded thereon a garrison of some eighteen soldiers.

The Bass is a very high rock in the middle of the sea, some miles distant from the nearest point of land to which is south of it; covered it is with the uppermost parts thereof, where is where herds grow, with some cherry trees, the fruit of which I several times tasted. In this garden there is a chapel for divine service, but, in regard no minister was allowed to be there, the ammunition of the garrison was kept there. Landing here is very difficult and dangerous, if any storm blow, ye cannot enter because of the violence of the swelling waves, which beat with a wonderful noise upon the rock, and for such a violent manner, that the breakers resounded on the rock with a noise like the

is there any place of landing but one about the whole rock, which is of circumference some three quarters of a mile; here you may land in a fair day and full sea without great hazard, the rest of it on every side being so high and steep: only, on the south-side thereof, the rock falls a little level, where you ascend several steps till you come to the governor's house, and from that some steps higher you ascend to a level court, where a house for prisoners and soldiers is; whence likewise, by windings cut out of the rock, there is a path leading you to the top of the rock, whose height doth bear off all north, east and west storms, lying open only to the south; and on the uppermost parts of the rock there is grass sufficient to feed twenty or twenty four sheep, who are there very fat and good. In these uppermost parts of the rock were sundry walks, of some three score foot length, and some very solitary, where we sometimes entertained ourselves. The accessible places were defended with several walls and cannon placed on them, which compassed only the south parts. The rest of the rock is defended by nature, by the huge height and steepness of the rock, being some forty cubits high in the lowest-place. It was a part of a country-gentleman's inheritance, which falling from hand to hand, and changing many masters; it was at last bought by the King, who repaired the old houses and walls, and built some new houses for prisoners; and a garrison of twenty or twenty four soldiers are sufficient, if courageous, to defend it from millions of men, and only expugnable by hunger. It is commanded by a Lieutenant, who does reap thereby some considerable profit, which besides his pay, may be one hundred pounds a year and better. There is no fountain-water therein, and they are only served

with rain that falls out of the Clouds, and is preserved in some hollow caverns digged out of the rock. Their drink and provisions are carried from the other side by a boat, which only waits on the garrison, and hath a salary of six pounds yearly for keeping up the same, besides what they get of these persons that come either to see the prisoners, or are curious to see the garrison. Here fowls of several sorts are to be found, who build in the cliffs of the rock; the most considerable of which is the Solan-goose, whose young well fledged, ready to fly, are taken, and so yield near one hundred pounds yearly, and might be much more, were they carefully improved.

To this melancholly place I came, and continued there in prison for two years and a half; for I came in January 1677, and came out in July 1679. And here I had likewise experience of the goodness of God towards me; and, 1. In providing for me, without being chargeable to any for such things as I stood in need of. 2. In preserving and supporting me under great pressures of spirit from sin, sufferings, temptations, griefs, sorrows, and untenderness of brethren and friends, so as I was not therewith overwhelmed. 3. In preserving me in health all that time. 4. That in this time, partly by selling household-plenishing, and improving of my estate, I paid and cleared one hundred pounds of debts. 5. I had the comfort and edification of fellow-prisoners, both ministers and others, some there before me, and others brought in since my coming, whose company was sweet and edifying many times to me. 6. We had liberty, for the most part, of taking the air up the hill; my solitary walks were sometimes very pleasant to me. 7. I had the comfort of friends, that came in kindness to see us from the city and country.

8. I had some special visits from God, ordinarily in private duties, and sometimes in worshipping and conference with others. 9. Some increase (I think) I found in gifts, knowledge and grace; some further discoveries of the knowledge of Christ and the gospel I never had before. 10. I was made some way useful by writing of letters abroad, praying with and preaching to, and conference with others. 11. And that I had a cleanly unexpected deliverance from this sad place. 12. Some improvement I made of this price that was put in my hand, through grace that helped me; this I think I was bound to take notice of, and be thankful for to the Lord.

As for my exercises here, and improvement of my time; I judged, when I first came here, that I was called to some work and improvement of this price put in my hand: and therefore did I, 1. Exercise myself in lamenting my sins, and mispent life, and great shortcoming. 2. I laboured after, and desired, some further knowledge of God and Christ and grace, and to glorify God in my sufferings. 3. Some hours, morning and evening and mid-day, I spent in meditation, in praising, and reading the scripture, for keeping up and increasing communion with God, and increase of grace, and this constantly; besides several fast-days, which were my sweetest seasons and best times. 4. Every day I read the scriptures, exhorted and taught therefrom, did sing Psalms, and prayed with such of our society as our masters did allow and permit to worship God together; and this two times a-day. 5. I studied Hebrew and Greek, and gained some knowledge in these oriental Languages. 6. I likewise read some Divinity, and wrote a treatise of Faith, with some other miscellanies, and several letters to
christian

christian friends and relations. Thus I spent my time, and not without some fruit:

But prisons must be prisons, and all afflictions, tho' never so well sweetned, will be in some measure grievous. Tho' the Lord was pleased to *blow his rough wind in the day of his east-wind*, and to put a very light yoke upon our necks; yet was it still a yoke, and some bitter ingredients were mixed in this cup, something of the gall and vinegar we found; both that the Lord might discover and manifest to the world the cruel and unclean nature of the Spirit of Prelacy, and that our patience and faith might be the better exercised, and our faithfulness to Christ, and finally to wean us from the world, and sweeten to us the love of God in supporting under such troubles and delivering us out of them: for, 1. It could not be but sad to me and my brethren to think that we were cast out of the vineyard, and become useless, our commission taken from us, and could not glorify God as we had done. 2. Absence from natural and civil relations and friends was bitter, whose company was sweet, and which now we could not enjoy: now we might say, *Lover and Friend hast thou removed from us*, Psal. lxxxviii. ult. 3. The company of the ungodly, to whose hands we were delivered, and who ruled over us, who knew nothing of God, but were enemies to him, was grievous; that we lived among Lions, Wolves and Serpents, and dwelt in the tents of Kedar. 4. *It was then the days of old, when the candle of God shined upon our tabernacle, when my wife, children and relations were about me; when I went with the multitude that kept holy days: then (I say) did these things of old come and assault my remembrance with a sensible affecting grief.* 5. Our own servants were turned out from us, and we made

to seek servants whom we knew not; but this turned to our good and great advantage. 6. The great comfort that we had in worshipping of God together, and in eating together, was taken away from us by the folly and fears of some, and envy and malice of others, who grudged us this comfort, and who ruled us, and made us separate in worship and diet, and would not suffer us to come together; whereby our expences were much increased, and we deprived of the benefit of the variety of gifts. 7. Our letters that came to us, or were sent by us, were all looked many times, tho' they had no orders for it. 8. Our drink was dear and exceeding bad, and we behoved to take it from our governors, and pay exorbitantly for it. 9. Sometimes, when they would take it in their heads, they would shut us all close up, and not suffer any of us to speak to another; and this not only without, but contrary to, the council's order, who committed us free prisoners, and to have the liberty of the rock. This unwarranted restraint did sometimes afflict us, but our patience overcame it. 10. They vexed us by mixing in our company, and there blaspheming sometimes; and other times seeking to ensnare us by the words of our lips, and tabling discourse of publick matters, which seeing their malicious ends, we shunned. 11. They laboured to debauch our servant-maids, the governor's son offering ten shillings to a soldier if he could get such a person with child who served some of us, of purpose to reflect upon us; and which he effected, and was thereupon by the soldier challenged for his promise; inso-much that we could hardly get a servant-maid to wait upon us. 12. They by force and power kept the poor soldiers and others from conversing with or hearing us on the Lord's day, altho' the poor
creatures

creatures would gladly have heard us. 13. At the same time, likewise, I was very untenderly handled by some false brethren engaged in the same publick cause with ourselves. 14. We were sometimes in winter and spring very hardly put to it, for want of victuals and drink, insomuch that we had no other than snow-water or corrupted water sprinkled over with a little Oat-meal to drink, and some dry fish : these with other things made our lives something, and at sometimes bitter to us.

We continued thus some of us two years and a half. While the Archbishop lived, no intermission or mediation of friends could get me out, altho' several means were tried, which all proved ineffectual ; the council not accepting the engagements I would give, which were no other than compearing when called ; and I refusing their terms, which were, that I should not preach in the fields any more, and that I should live peaceable and orderly according to law : yet the Lord was pleased to answer my mind in some measure, that I should come out, and be delivered, and that by giving great liberty and freedom to pray for it, and assuring and filling my soul with the hopes and faith of it, altho' for a great while I could not pray for my deliverance. At another time the Lord was pleased to renew my commission to preach the gospel, even a year before I was delivered ; which made me think, and write to my friends, that I should be delivered. And, Lastly, I was made (from Jonah ii. ult. *And God spake to the fish, and it vomited Jonah on the dry land*) to believe that the Lord would speak to this rock to give me with others of my brethren up ; and accordingly, when the fulness of the time came, I was delivered, even then when we all judged it
most

most desperate : *At evening it was light.* For after the unhappy, rash and unadvised attempts at Bothwell of some well-meaning people for recovering off their liberties, and shaking of the yoke of Prelacy, and that our strength was broken and gone, such of us as were prisoners expecting every day when we should be brought out to be a sacrifice to the fury they were then in; behold, at that time did the Lord incline the heart of the King (out of what design we cannot certainly tell) to grant an indulgence, and withal to command and order that such prisoners as were not in accession to the late rebellion should be set at liberty, or who were sentenced merely for Nonconformity : upon which we were taken out of the Bas, and carried, to the number of eight or nine of us, to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh; for tho' the King's orders did require we should be freely set at liberty, yet would not the council let us go, until we gave security to appear when called, under the penalty of five hundred and sixty pounds. There were about fourteen of us prisoners at the time, and in twenty four hours space we found security for eight hundred pounds; for we would not give oblidgement not to rise in arms, nor to forbear field-meetings, because we saw no law for it, and because it was conceived by us dishonourable, and to reflect upon our ministry. Forth we came, and were set at liberty, to the joy of our friends; and, while at liberty, I preached once every Lord's day, lived a wandering unsettled life. Whatever family I came to, I laboured to be something useful there. I looked to my affairs, paid two thousand merks of debt at that time, and so continued until November 1681, that I with my cautioners were cited to appear before the council for preaching, as afterwards ye *shall hear.*

SECT. IV.

Of my second imprisonment in Edinburgh and Blackness.

NOW begun persecution to increase and wax hot against Dissenters; some ministers were taken and sent to the Bais; the liberty the King had given for preaching, partly because it was not universally accepted but by some contemned, and partly by the Prelates perswasion, was recalled by the King: and when they had gotten us to forbear meetings in fields, in hope of liberty to meet in houses, the King, who gave his indulgence but during pleasure, recalled and discharged his grant, and ordained the execution of the laws against Dissenters; and we, being out of the road of field-meetings, could never fall into it again: but tho' we did forbear field-conventicles, when once they had got us from that, they drove us from house conventicles too. The Duke of York, being then in Scotland, did much concur with the Prelates against Dissenters, so that never one of us that ever appeared had any favour shown to us; and Dissenters were as much put to it as ever. Being south, as I returned I preached in a Barn to a good number of people on a Lord's day: the council got word of this, and it was informed against me that I preached in the fields; so that orders were given to cite me and my surety both to appear before the council; but being informed better, and perceiving it was only a house-conventicle, their citation slept, and only spoke to my cautioner who was there, and who short while thereafter, coming north, found me lying sick of an Ague, and told me how matters went, and that

that he was purposed to write to the Bishop of Edinburgh and the Lord Advocate concerning my case, and that I was very sick: which I earnestly dissuaded him from; for I said, if the Prelates hear I am sick, they will certainly cause cite me, in hopes that either I cannot appear being sick, and so fall in the forfeiture of my bond of five hundred and sixty pounds, which they would gladly be in hands with; or, if I would appear, I might thereby endanger my life. This indeed I thought: but my surety would not be counselled by me, but acquainted the Bishop of my sickness, and that I preached not in the fields. The Bishop no sooner received this letter, and by which he understood of my sickness, but incontinently he revives the citation, his brother being clerk to the council. Some prejudice they had at my surety, a gentleman of good estate, and who was judged something whiggish; for he had been engaged in one thousand seven hundred pound Sterling for Nonconformist ministers, and besides was of a name very odious to some great men: they thought (as was supposed) I would not appear being sick, and the day of my appearance in the very dead time of winter, the twenty second of December, upon which they would cause my surety forfeit his bond. A citation was directed north, of which we heard word about the beginning of November, and did think fit to prevent the same. Many of my friends counselled me rather to forfeit the money than to go, for both they and myself had some apprehensions that the council intended to have my life; for it was a time wherein the council was in a very bad humour, and at the very same time had found Lord Argyll guilty of treason for that which truly to us, that knew not the law, seemed to have no affinity therewith.

therewith, and to some of the chief lawyers of note likewise. Moreover, I knew that preaching in the fields was death by the law to the minister; and that the law declared, that, if any person stood without to hear, tho' the minister and body of the people were within doors, that such a meeting was a field-meeting; and it was impossible for me to hinder or know when persons were without, and I thought it hard to shut doors upon them, and had not freedom to do it. And, besides all this, I was informed some notes of my sermon were in the council's hands, and thereupon intended to stage me, and proceed me criminally; and I knew not what they might make of popular discourses, tho' never so honestly meant. All these things made myself and friends have some fear of the danger of my life; but notwithstanding, getting my head above the fear of death and power of men, I resolved upon all hazards, and to venture to appear; and I was much encouraged in this by my sudden and unexpected recovery (and that without any means) of an Ague that I kept but six weeks in all: I not only recovered, but was so strengthened, that I durst undertake a journey of such a length, and so bad way, in the midst of winter; and truly I found the Lord so gracious, that tho' I had been sick short while before, and that the weather was very bad, yet was I kept from any prejudice, and came the day before that of my appearance to Edinburgh in good health, and my surety with me: and the day of my appearance happened to be the next day or second after the Earl of Argyll's escape, which did much put them in a bad humour.

The council was surprised (as it seemed to me) when I appeared; and, after some astonishment

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and silence, an indictment was commanded to be read against me charging me with preaching in the fields and without authority, and finally charging me with venting of principles that were pernicious, seditious and rebellious, and tending to alienate the minds of his Majesty's subjects from his government, and therefore ought to be severely punished to the terror of others. The Advocate for the King did refer all to my oath: and being commanded by the president to depone whether I had preached any in houses or in fields since I came from the Bais; and a few days respite to answer to the indictment, which I humbly and earnestly fought, in regard that I had a tedious long journey, bad weather, long sickness before, and my Spirit disordered, that I could not give so satisfying an answer as otherwise I would, and that I had come but yesterday to town, and had not time to consider the indictment (having never seen the same nor heard it till it was read) I say, this respite being denied, I told them that I was ready to swear that I was innocent of what I was charged with in the indictment, and therefore desired I might have liberty to speak for myself; which was granted. Then did I discourse to them a large half-hour (without being interrupted) in answer to what I was charged with. My design in this was to prevent the torment of their questions, and likewise to state the true grounds of our sufferings, and vindicate myself and others of the imputations laid upon us by our enemies. The sum of what I said was; after hearty and humble thanks returned for the liberty of speaking for myself, I protested, that I endeavoured to discharge what I conceived my duty with as little offence to authority as I could; and that, were the things I was called in question a-

bout such as I could come and go upon, relating only to my own person or interest in the world, I should be loth to be heard with their Lordships, but refer myself and these things wholly to their disposal: that I should be short, ingenuous and clear in my answer for myself: that to the first and second head of preaching without authority and in the fields, that I had acknowledged I had preached, and was neither ashamed or terrified to own this; but that I preached not in the fields since I came out of the laws, nor yet without authority, seeing I was called by God and such of his servants as I verily did believe had power from Christ for that effect; and therefore was the first part of my indictment elided and answered: that, as to my preaching seditious principles, I might with a good conscience deny it; and, because that both myself and others were slandered and defamed as persons of disloyal and antimagistratical principles, I should therefore give an account of what principles were maintained by myself and them, and what my practices were: that as to doctrines and dogmatical points, and articles of religion, my faith was contained in, and according to the scriptures of the Old and New Testament; that I was of the reformed protestant religion, and did approve, and was ready to subscribe to, that Confession of Faith in King James his time, and ratified (I supposed) by the present current parliament: that as to the King's Majesty's authority and power, that I acknowledged Magistracy an ordinance of God, and the present King's authority, whose subject and servant I was, and obliged to submit to, reverence and esteem, whom, for any thing relating to my person or estate, I never was resolved to resist; but how far his power extended, or in what subject it was first placed, or how

how conveyed, I thought not so much my part as that of Lawyers to determine. For the King's power in ecclesiastical matters, I acknowledged the persons of ministers and other ecclesiastical persons subject to him; and that he had a jurisdiction civil, reaching to not only civil, but likewise spiritual things, which he was to judge, that so he might, as the nursing father of the church, either encourage, or punish or restrain in a coercive way, and that not implicitly, relying on the judgment of or seeing with other eyes; and that he might call synods when and where he pleased, and propose his mind to them, whose duty it not only was, but wisdom, to take the magistrate's concurrence when it might be had: but that it was undeniable, this power of the magistrate's was not privative of any intrinsic power of the church, granted to her by Christ, for preserving and edifying of herself; which therefore, in case of the magistrate's opposition to the truth, or want of access to him thro' distance of place or other casual emergencies, they might exercise without him; as was clearly seen in the times of the Heathen, Arrian and Roman Emperors. That, as to the government of the church, it was true that I did not close with that form of government by Archbishops and Bishops now established in the kingdom, and therefore could never concur with or submit to the same any manner of way; but whatever my dissatisfaction therewith was, or opposition thereto, I never opposed it, but with spiritual weapons. And as for my practice, I can say, I have endeavoured to keep a good conscience both before God and Men, to live unblameable, and peaceably, giving to God *what was God's* and to Cesar *what was Cesar's*; was never in any insurrection, rebellion or conspiracy

against his Majesty's Person or government, nor never stirred up others thereto, but rather to live peaceably, and by repentance, reformation, testimony for God, quietness and confidence, and other spiritual means, to expect deliverance; not by irritating of the rulers, to make their bonds heavier, by taking the sword, and resisting by force; and this both publicly in sermons, and privately in discourses. These therefore being our principles, which we are not ashamed of, but ready to defend; it is a wonder to me how I or any sober person of our way come to be challenged for seditious principles and practices, or charged with them. If these principles be innocent, then is the second and great part of my libel, referred to my oath, elided. And finally, I prayed the Lord to bless his Majesty with all his blessings both spiritual and temporal; that he might be a terror to evil-doers, an encouragement to the good; that the throne might be established in righteousness.

After this discourse, to which they hearkened very patiently, I was asked, whether I preached since I came out of the Bais? to which I replied, I would answer to what I was charged with in my libel or indictment, which was not that I preached, but that I preached without authority, and seditiously; which I did deny. They enquired me very earnestly and pressing, who ordained me? I told them, I could not be free to tell them, seeing it concerned others whom I was not to stage; but that I had lawful and good authority, and that their Lordships could not compel me to answer to that matter: nor judged I myself bound to answer thereto, because it was *res hæcenus judicata*, for which I was formerly questioned, and satisfied the law for; and therefore could not now
again

again be called in question for the same fault. And, seeing that my commission to preach was before the act of grace, any crime therein (if any was) was by the act of grace purged : and besides; the same not being in any indictment, I was not bound to answer thereto. I was removed ; and after some debate among themselves (for many of the counsellors were much taken with my discourse and defence I made, and voted that I might be let go) the matter being left to the Bishops, I was called in and received the following sentence ; to be sent to prison to Blackness, and to continue there until I paid the fine of five thousand merks, and give security not to preach any more, or go off the kingdom. And my guard was ready to convey me to be sent to the common Jail of Edinburgh, and there to remain.

Many of the by-standers (for there were multitudes there) were surprised at the severity of the sentence ; yea, some of the privy council talked publicly, that I had met with hard measure. Well, I came to the Jail, and had a chamber the best in the prison ; the keeper and under-keepers of the prison of Edinburgh were very discreet and civil ; I had abundance of visits every day from some good people and persons of quality. When I first came, I examined my ways and carriage, and found matter both of humiliation and thanksgiving unto the Lord : I saw ground to bless God, that I vindicated the Lord's people from the aspersions cast upon them of bad principles ; I boldly and freely, to the conviction of all, owned our principles ; and I likewise desired not only to speak for myself, but to honour God : I saw ground of humiliation for many failings in me, which did confound me ; yet was glad if the gospel did not receive prejudice by me. I got little good

good done; for I ordinarily slept till seven in the morning; and after supper, which was at eight o'clock, I was drowsy; and all day over I was diverted with visits: yet I got my speech written, and some letters, and preached twice every Lord's day to the prisoners, and some few who were suffered to come in. Twice did I supplicate for my liberty while I was in Edinburgh, but could not obtain it, because of the Bishops and the Clerk of the Council the Bishop's Brother, who was my great enemy, tho' I never disoblighd him in my lifetime.

After I had continued six weeks in Edinburgh, I was sent to Blackness, convoyed by four or five gentlemen of the guard, where I continued seven weeks. Ignorance, youth, and fear of man, made the governor of this place not so discreet as otherwise he would be to me: For, First, He kept me in a manner a close prisoner; another had still the key of my chamber, tho' I could command him to come and open it when I pleased, and which was not according to the Council's order. Next, He would be frequently drunk, and then was guilty of some extravagancies; he likewise kept back many of my friends from coming to see me, which did pick me at him: and the first night he was so indiscreet, as to put me into a gouty, cold, wide, dark, filthy, smoky room, where I could not have lived six days, if I had therein continued, for smoke, darkness, melancholly and cold, although at the same time he had better rooms; but his Lady though a child not above fourteen years, and another gentleman that came along with me, prevailed so far with him as to change my room, and then was I very well. Here I continued seven weeks, doing little good, but longing and praying for deliverance out of that
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fact place; which the Lord thus brought to pass: My brother-in-law, unknown to me, presented a supplication to the Council in my behalf, desiring my fine might be remitted, myself ordered to be set at liberty, some competent time allowed me to settle my affairs in Scotland, seeing I was content to submit to their Lordships sentence of banishment. Which supplication (the Duke of York and Bishop with his brother being away and gone to England) was easily granted by the Council: an order was sent to the governor of Blackness immediately to set me at liberty, a month was given me to settle my affairs; whereupon I was much sooner than I thought set at liberty, and at a time when I little thought of it, and my liberty burdened with no clog or sinful engagement by my cautioner, who only bound that I should remove out of the kingdom (and not return without King or Council's leave) within such a day.

SECT. V.

Of my Banishment.

I Did not know any thing of what my friends had done for me, nor could blame them for what they had done: the terms were honest upon which I was to come out; liberty was desirable, though in a strange country, and preferable to imprisonment at home. I looked upon wicked folk, tho' Scotsmen, as the greatest alien, foreigners and strangers to me; a godly man in England or Ireland is more my countryman than a wicked Scotsman. Besides, by being at liberty, I should be in greater capacity to glorify the Lord than under restraint, where I could not see a god-
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ly person, nor be anywise useful save by a few letters. And I saw much of the mercy of God, that without paying a fine, or engaging to any sinful terms, the Council should have given orders for my liberation.

But notwithstanding of all this, when I thought upon my case, banishment was grievous and burdensome to me : Shall I leave then (said I) my native country ? shall I leave, and never see mother, children, brethren, sisters, and kindly friends and relations, and spend the residue of my days among strangers, to whom I will be as a barbarian ? What care will they take of me ? how shall I be maintained ? Will any little thing, that after payment of debts my estate can spare, be sufficient for me to live upon in a place where all things are at a dear rate ? Truly all those considerations, and such like, did make banishment no light thing to bear, and with that I never had come out of prison, and in my heart to censure and think hardly of these who procured my liberty ; yea, such thoughts would for some whole nights keep me waking.

But, addressing myself to the Lord, and pouring out my troubled soul (as it was ordinary for me to do in such cases) to the Lord, I found that this storm calmed ; and the consideration of God's providence over and propriety in all places, experience of former favours, and especially that word, *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life*, did sweetly stay my heart : And being made and called of God to wander from my father's house, and land of nativity, to a land God would shew me, I laboured to fit myself for my journey, and to *take up my Cross* : and the Lord did bless my endeavours, as in a short time I settled all my civil affairs, and was ready to come away at the time prefixed.

So as, leaving Scotland and all friends there, I directed my course for London about the latter end of May 1682; and after some stops, and dangers by sea, I safely arrived there June 16th 1682. My voyage was much alleviated by the company of another contryman who came alongst with me, whose company was much satisfying to me. I brought not above twenty pounds of silver and gold with me to London, but the Lord I found was with me in all places where I was driven; for I had both meat and wages. I did resolve indeed, as sensible of my own weakness, to forbear preaching, and any publick work; as likewise, to settle myself after long and great tossings, to improve, in a private abstract station, my spiritual condition: but God did thwart this; for, the more I endeavoured this way, the worse I became: and likewise at the same time I had calls to preach at several places, some of which I closed with, and found more of spiritual good and advantage to my soul than in private exercises. Wherefore I resolved to follow that way, and did every night preach and pray in a private family, where some five or six neighbours at night did ordinarily resort; every Lord's day I preached to a gathered church in fellowship with Mr. C. from whom I had ten shillings for every sermon; at other times I likewise preached to others, but freely. And truly the Lord gave me to find both great favour and respect from the English, and more than many others did, and whom I found to be as gentle, tender-hearted and generous people as ever I conversed with. Some of them I found very notional, and much taken up with fancies, dreams and singular opinions: of these I found some favourable at the beginning; but despairing to gain me to their opinion, and finding the aversion of
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my heart to these fancies, they became my enemies, and did labour to break my reputation as much as they could. I lived the first seven months upon my own charges for all things; but afterwards I had a call from a widow-gentlewoman to stay in her family, to pray, and sometimes exhort and preach: from her I had lodging and diet free, and in whose house I prayed, read, and expounded scripture twice a-day; and thus continued till the 21st of July 1683, that I was apprehended, and imprisoned in Newgate for six months, for refusing the Oxford Oath.

SECT. VI.

Of my third imprisonment.

UPON the 20th or 21st July 1683, about the time that a plot against the King's Person and government was discovered, and some three or four days after my Lord Ruffel's execution; at ten o'clock I was expeding a certain business with a gentleman in Cheapside, and one Mr. A. one of the King's messengers, searching for suspected persons in that very house where I was, and particularly for one Mr. Sands, meeting me as I came down, and knowing me to be a stranger, and suspecting me as some disaffected person, did presently secure me by a constable, and brought me to his own house, kept me close prisoner some five or six hours, and thereafter brought me before some of the council: there were the King, the Duke of York, L. K. L. S. and some others I know not. After some frivolous immaterial questions relating to my nation, and when I came here, where I lodged, and some others of that nature,

I was asked, what I knew or heard of a plot against his Majesty at any time? I replied, that I knew nothing of a plot against his Majesty's Person or government, nor heard any thing but what was discovered since that plot did break out, nor knew nor heard any thing I could make them the wiser by; that I was no publick person, nor frequenter of cabals or coffee-houses; that I know not any one person, either accusers or accused, in that plot; that I always lived peaceably, and was never accessory to any plot or insurrection that ever was; that in my judgment (which I declared) I was against all violent attempts against his Majesty or government; and that it was not likely any who had such designs, knowing my principles, would communicate ought to me of it; yea, that I always shunned discourses of that nature: thereafter I was asked by his Majesty, what I judged of the Archbishop of St. Andrews's murder, whether I judged it so or not? I answered, that for myself I had no accession thereto, but was very grieved when I heard it; and I would not justify or have had any hand in it for the whole world: so for me to condemn it as (and to declare it) murder, was I not free; for being a doer of the law only, and not a judge of the law, I conceived it as out of my sphere to give judgment of another person's actions, whether they were murderers or not: that this I confessed belonged to his Majesty and officers of justice, who were judges of the law, but to me it did not; especially being a stranger to the fact, and legal evidences of the nature, manner and circumstances of the same not being adduced, it was hard for me or any person to give judgment one way or other of the said fact. And for my thoughts of it, that God had appointed a solemn court at the last day for judging of actions, words and thoughts, be-

fore which court alone it was competent (I thought) to give account of thoughts; and therefore referring myself as to my thoughts to that court only, I was not free to give account to any human judiciary whatever of them; to whom yet I heartily submitted in the expressions and actions to be judged. And finally, tho' I was not afraid his Majesty knew what were my thoughts in the matter, yet would not be a precedent to any of his subjects to be made to give an account of thoughts judicially, especially relating to other persons; and therefore to have me excused. Then the King was pleased to ask me, whether I judged myself bound by the solemn League and Covenant? and whether I thought there was any thing of moral obligation therein? I answered, that, for my part, I never took that covenant, nor was it ever tendered to me; but what was of moral import in it, I judged I was bound thereto, altho' I myself never took it; and that, however the words of the decalogue and the covenant were not the same, yet might the covenant be reduced to it, as materially the same with the decalogue: that I remembered two chief articles of the covenant the one was *reformation of our hearts and lives according to the word of God*; and this I thought might be easily reduced to every precept of the decalogue, each of which tied us to reformation and repentance: another article I conceived to be in the covenant was, that we should *maintain and defend the King's just privileges, his person and government*; and this, as I judged, might easily be reduced to the decalogue; so did I judge myself by the word of God, laws of the land, yea, and covenant itself, tho' never taken by me personally, bound to. After this I was asked some questions concerning my acquaintance with several persons, as Mr. Fergusson, the Cesnocks, Mr. Munro, Mr. Baillie.

Baillie of Jerviswood and others; to which I gave a true, full, ingenuous answer, and was after commanded to remove. What were their thoughts of me, I know not; but it seems they were satisfied I was not in the plot, nor could tell them ought of it, and that I dealt ingenuously with them; and yet were not willing to let me go so, but referred me to the Lord Mayor, and ordered him to put the oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy and Oxford Oath to me.

The next day therefore I appeared before the Lord Mayor, and was much grieved and troubled that my trials should be stated on the oaths of allegiance and supremacy: for I had neither clearness to take them both, especially the oath of supremacy; nor yet was I so willing to suffer upon the account of refusing them, as being a dark case to me. But, when the messenger told me I was ordered to take the three oaths, my heart was very glad, as being very clear to suffer for refusing the Oxford Oath; wherein a man is bound, besides other things, not to endeavour to make any alteration in the government either in state or church; which I thought hard to swallow. Wherefore, when asked by my Lord Mayor, whether I would take the said oaths, after I had asked whether Queen Elisabeth's explication might be read to me, and proposed some reasons why I conceived myself not bound by law to take the said oaths, and overruled therein; at last my answers did issue in this, that as for the oath of allegiance, I was willing to take it, so that it would end the strife; for the oath of supremacy, I demurred upon it, until I advised better; and for the Oxford Oath, I Simpliciter refused it presently: but, if I had not benefit by the oath of allegiance, I would take none of them at all; and in the mean time de-

red, if they committed me, to do it upon refusing the Oxford Oath: which carried by the Lord Mayor's indulgence, and Sir J. E. who spake in my favours very much against the common Sergeant's mind, who pressed much that I should be committed for refusing all the oaths. So an order was drawn, and I sent to Newgate.

In Newgate I continued fix lunar months, or twenty four weeks. Here I had experience of the Lord's goodness and mercy, which did never leave me: I had, short while after I came, one of the best rooms in the prison, in which any person might lodge; a large, cleanly, lightsome, square room it was, and off the ground as ye come in: the Captain and under-keepers were all very civil to us, carrying both wisely and discreetly: I kept my health very well all the time I was there: we had comfortable fellowship with fellow-prisoners, who might see one another all day; some I perceived notional, unlearned, yet obstinate: I stood at the greatest distance with free-willers; but such as I had greatest converse with were these of our own persuasion, who were truly the most sober and learned that were there. In general, I found all of them civil: we were abundantly refreshed and supplied by numbers of all ranks and persuasions (save quakers) that came in to see us: we wanted nothing. So that I could hardly call it suffering. Only this was sad to us, and which made me desirous to be gone and at liberty, that, 1. We had no occasion of doing good to others, for we preached none while there; for we were not suffered, nor others to come in to us. 2. It was grievous to me especially, that I had no occasions nor opportunities for retirement; for having a chamber-fellow with me, and all day oppressed with visitants, I could not in the twenty four hours command one for myself: wherefore I
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did little or no good here, and got as little; only I gave my testimony for Christ, and had experience of the Lord's goodness. When the number of my weeks were fulfilled, I was without further work put at liberty, the Turnkey getting word only from the Captain to set me at liberty, and let me out when I pleased. So taking my leave of the Captain, and thanking him for his civilities, I came out; my expences in all not reaching above twenty pounds.

SECT. VII.

Observations upon my Sufferings.

1. **T**HAT such as will live godly in the world must and will suffer persecution, for the trial and exercise of their faith and patience, purging away of their dross, and of weaning their hearts from a present world, and for confirmation of the truth, 2 Tim. iii. 12. 1 Pet. iv. 12. John xv. 3. 2. Altho' at sometimes there be more or less of persecution, yet there is no time in which the saints shall be without daily crosses; for a wicked world will persecute with the tongue, even in Abraham's family, where piety did obtain, Gal. iv. 28, 29. Gen. xxi. 9. Even when religion was favoured, I found persecution by reproach, and contempt of wicked men. 3. There are some special days of persecution, when hell breaks loose, and when great trials come, which are called *the hour of temptation*, and *the evil day*, *the hour and power of darkness*, Rev. iii. 10. Eph. vi. 13. Luke viii. 13, 22, 25. 4. The Lord *stayeth his rough wind in the day of his east-wind*, Isa. xxvii. 9. He many times puts an end to the extremities of his people's personal trials e'er he exercises with pub-

lick sufferings; he *lays not on men more than is meet*, and therefore suffers not a multitude of evils to ly upon his poor people at once, 1 Cor. x. 10. 5. God first (I find) ordinarily exerciseth with personal afflictions, e'er he call them to sufferings on account of Christ, that, being exercised with the one, they may better bear the other. 6. I find that the Lord doth many times affright us with troubles which never come upon us, as he did to Nineveh; and we are made to fear that which the mercy of God never suffers to touch us, Jonah i. 3. 7. But seldom or never doth a great personal or publick stroke come upon the Lord's people, but he gives them some warning and notice of it before-hand, that we be not surpris'd, but prepared for it, Zeph. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4. 8. Obstinacy in sin and impenitency, and the removing of God's precious people, with security under this, have had greatest influence upon my fears of a day of desolation, Na. lvii. 12. Ezek. xi. 3, 4. Isa. ix. 4, 5. 9. Our fears, unbeliefs and discouragements, with our confusions, are our greatest troubles in a day of trouble; It is a prison within a prison, Psal. cxlii. *O bring my soul out of trouble.* Our galled fore backs made our burdens more grievous to us, sin and unbelief are bad ballast in a storm. 10. The cross of Christ, when we once engage with it, is nothing so terrible, is nothing so heavy as at a distance in apprehension it is: How dreadful did a prison and appearing before synagogues appear to me! but, when I did encounter therewith, I found it nothing so terrible to me. 11. I was never in that trouble yet upon the account of Christ, but I was delivered out of it by the Lord, and that when it seemed very desperate to look for salvation, Psal. xxxiv. 25. *The troubles of the righteous are many, but the Lord delivereth out of them all.* We are to believe deliverance from all
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our troubles, tho' we cannot tell when or how.

12. Nothing contributes more to a christian carriage under trouble, than faith of God's support in and deliverance out of trouble, James v. 7, 8. Unbelief sinks the heart.

13. It is matter of great humiliation to us, that our troubles and afflictions do us but little good sometimes, that we are so unfruitful under the rod: and especially I observe, that small troubles have but small influence; every phyfic doth not work with strong constitutions. My lighter troubles, whether upon a personal or more publick account, I found but little good by them: it was a deep heart-reaching stroke that did me good: and in times of greatest fears, sharpest afflictions, it was ever still best with me; and at first afflictions do not so much good, it is afterwards that they reap *the peaceable fruits of righteousness*, Heb. xii. And even when the Lord blesses them to do good, the fruit alas is but small; we are not so good under them as we ought to be or might.

14. I have observed, the more the Lord's people are afflicted and persecuted, the more they grow; and the gospel never thrives better than when it is persecuted, Ex. i. 12. Phil. i. 12. Such things as happened to me, have been *for the furtherance of the gospel*. All the malice of men could never have broken us, if we had not undone ourselves; they *ploughed with our beiser*: For the spreading of the gospel was the effect of a long time of their greatest severities.

15. Persecutors are ungodly, are cruel, are deceitful; and this did I see evidently, all persecutors have these three properties: and therefore let us beware of such persons, and keep at the utmost distance with them, and expect no good from them; let us not lean on them who smite us; let us suspect all their favours, *for the kisses of an enemy are deceitful*; but let our eyes be only to the Lord.

16. Too great love
respect

respect to, intimacy and communion with wicked men, and not standing at due distance with them, provokes the Lord to give his people into the hands of the wicked. The Israelites wicked confederacy with the Canaanites made them *briers and thorns in their sides*; had we carried to the ungodly as we ought to have done, we should not have smarted as we do this day. 17. It is a very great comfort to a godly person, that his persecutors and enemies are God's enemies, and wicked persons: *Let my enemies be as the wicked, saith Job.* We may expect good hearing from God against them. It doth much likewise to determine us in our duties, that what they are for must be ill, and what they are against must be good: and, notwithstanding of the confidence of some compliers, it is strange that in almost six thousand years one instance from scripture or authentic history cannot be given. 18. Under publick sufferings we are mostly called to submission and patience, both in reference to God and men; *In patience possess your souls*: and to christian cheerfulness. O what a comely thing it is to see a meek sufferer, like the Master, *not opening his mouth, but dumb as a sheep is before the shearer!* and how ordinarily do men fall in this great sin of impatience? And cheerfulness under the cross of Christ is no less beautiful; and therefore how frequent such precepts and examples, to *glory, rejoice in tribulation?* for this gives a good report of Christ, his cause and cross to others. 19. Sufferings on publick accounts are not only our duty, but our great priviledge; to suffer for Christ is one of Christ's love-gifts, Phil. i. ult. *It is given you to suffer for the name of Christ.* To give testimony for Christ and his truth, is our greatest honour: a sufferer and a witness for Christ is the most honourable person and officer in the king-
dom

dom of Christ; it is Christ's highest and honourablest employment, Acts v. *They rejoiced they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ.* 20. Reproach and shame, and ill-will of men, is the heaviest of Christ's crosses to bear; *Reproach hath broken my heart,* saith David. 21. It is the great guilt of professors this day, that they not only shun the ways of God, but are ashamed of them, and of the cross of Christ, yea, and of the truths of Christ; of such will Christ be ashamed. 22. It is a very hard matter to get our sufferings stated upon Christ's account, but yet it is very necessary we get it done; for many objections doth a poor suffering soul meet with in this case, as possibly not so clear to many as the matter of the suffering of Christians under Heathens, and of Protestants under Papists: nor is the call to such a thing clear at such a time; some sinful accession of our own (thro' want of consideration or mistake) to our trouble, sense of guilt and unworthiness, doth render our cause dark to us many times: that as it was said of these, *ye did not fast to me;* so may it be said to us, *ye suffer not to me, nor for me, but for your sins and yourselves.* 23. Outward trouble from the hands of persecutors may be both a rod and correction for sin, and a testimony for Christ and his truth: the Lord Jesus may by one rod design both the correction and chastisement of his church and people, and likewise design a confirmation and witness to his truth, cause and work. Heb. xii. 12. the publick sufferings of the believing Hebrews were *chastisements for our profit.* 24. We by our sins therefore may provoke the Lord to deliver us into the hands of men, and by our weakness we may have some sinful hand and occasion thereto, and great failings attending our sufferings; and yet Christ accept of our sufferings, so maimed, as a testimony for him. 25. Whatever pretext wicked persecu-
tors

true: and of afflicting God's people; and that
 they be schismatick, scandalous, seditious, that
 they walk disorderly; yet the true ground of their
 quarrell is because of their enmity to God and god-
 liness; and therefore we may be assured we suffer
 for Christ and for his cause: *all these things will
 they do unto you, because the love of the Father is not
 in them.* And David saith, that all his enemies
 quarrel with him was, *because he followed after the
 which was good.* It is the enmity that is between
 the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman,
 Gen. iii. 15. Mat. xxiii. 33. John xv. 19, 21. 26.
 I observe, that the Lord doth accept of the faith-
 ful ends and endeavours, and honest intention and
 zeal of his people, when the methods, and parti-
 cular means and courses they take for witnessing
 for Christ, are sometimes not altogether justifiable;
 as he who scruples thro' want of light an oath is
 itself lawful, out of zeal for the glory of God
 which he fears by taking this oath he wrongs, and
 thereupon suffers, this man's sufferings are accep-
 ted of Christ as a testimony for him. 27. The
 controversy this day is as manifestly stated betwixt
 Christ and the Devil, sin and godliness, whether
 the world should be Christ's subjects, or the De-
 vil's and sin's subjects, as ever it was. The smal-
 ler differences, tho' in themselves of no great con-
 sequence, yet centre in this great gulf of rebellion
 against God. To touch any thing belonging to
 this wicked generation, Christ's stated enemies, or
 to have ought ado with them, is dangerous, Numb.
 xvi. 26. and they are the emissaries of Satan, and
 doing his work, who plead for union and compli-
 ance with them. 28. Yet ought not the miscar-
 riages of superiors dissolve the civil or natural
 bonds of relation to them, Mat. xxiii. 1, 2. we
 are to do and be submissive to the commands of
 superiors, tho' we be not to imitate their practice.

29. Man's wrath, and all persecution, shall tend and work to the praise of God, and the good of saints; Psal. lxxvi. 10. Isa. xxxi. 10. and this is a marvellous consolation. 30. Many a time may we in a publick stroke of persecution see our sin and guilt clearly and legibly written, as in Adonibezek, Judges i. & Gen. xix. Such as burned with unnatural lust to one another, are justly consumed with fire from heaven: and it is just that lovers, whom we preferred to Christ, be the instruments of our greatest trouble. 31. Many times do the people of God find great favour and kindness at the hands of natural men, yea, and more sometimes than from the truly godly: the earth helped the woman many times. I found some professors of religion stood at greater distance with me, than did mere natural and graceless persons. 32. The preservation of some, of a remnant in a day of straits, is exceeding wonderful and marvellous sometimes. 33. *The wicked are snared in the work of their own hands*, Psal. ix. and Hamans hanged on their own gallows: the Lord makes the weapons of the wicked recoil on themselves; every mean for a good while they take in hand, doth but weaken them, and increase the other party. 34. It is the people of God that only can undo and harm themselves; and it is by division that it is done: while we stood in one Spirit, we could not be overcome or prevailed against; but false brethren crept in amongst us, divided and broke us thro' the subtilty of adversaries, and did draw us to rash enterprises. 35. The greatest consolations do attend the greatest tribulations, 2 Cor. i. 5, 6. 36. The first brunt of the cross is saddest and sharpest; *no affliction for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous*. 37. Great outward troubles, whether personal or on publick accounts, quicken and revive our apprehensions of eternity. 38. And always do

us good ; tho' not alike good to all, nor so sensibly, yet no cross but we get some good of it. 39. I found it very hard to appear before councils, and carry rightly. We seek rather to save ourselves in any lawful way, than to honour and give testimony for Christ ; and there is not boldness, and dependence on Christ for assistance. 40. There is not so much of the *Spirit of glory resting upon* Sufferers, as hath been formerly : which I think flows from these three ; 1. That our testimony for Christ is not so glorious ; 2. That a sadder shock is coming ; and, Lastly, That our sufferings are so moderate. 41. Yet, blessed be the Lord, for my part I have found the Lord in a special way with me in all my sufferings, and I never repent of any thing I have suffered for Christ. 42. Tho' the Lord can sanctify and bless any lot to his people, yet, to speak absolutely, an afflicted condition in the world is best for God's people. 43. The infinite condescendence of God, and his gracious and tender nature, is that only which can be a bottom to our faith ; to believe we suffer for Christ, and as such to be accepted and looked upon by him. 44. There is a large allowance for sufferers for righteousness ; but many live not upon their allowance, and therefore look so ill upon it.

